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CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Arab-Israeli Talks

Palestinian Delegate Views 'Tangible Progress' *[MENA]* 1
Gaps in Security Talks 'Unbridgeable' *[Jerusalem New Channel TV]* 1
'Arafat, Rabin To Sign Civilian Transfer Agreement *[MENA]* 1
Minister on 'Real Difficulties' in Economic Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 1

Palestinian Affairs

Opposition 'Alliance' Meets Despite Hamas Rebuff 2
Meeting Agenda Detailed *[London AL-HAYAH 20 Feb]* 2
Hamas Criticizes Framework *[AL- QUDS 22 Feb]* 2
Hamas Said Seeking To Control Opposition *[AL-DUSTUR 22 Feb]* 3
Four Executive Members Oppose Cairo Agreement *[VOL]* 4
Hawatimah: PLO Leadership Opposes Accord Referendum *[AL-QUDS 20 Feb]* 4
Radio Views Ability To Achieve Independence *[VOP]* 4
Talk Warns Against Enemy's 'Intrigues,' Rumors *[VOP]* 5

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Foreign Minister Says 'No Rift' With Libya *[JANA]* 6
Two FIS Members Released From Prison *[Algiers Radio]* 6
Newspaper Strike Ends; Dailies To Reappear *[Algiers TV]* 6

Egypt

Minister Denies Government Under 'Threat,' Comments *[HA'ARETZ 22 Feb]* 6
Musa on Bosnia, Southern Sudan, Events in Yemen *[MENA]* 7
Country's Stand on U.S. Actions in Sudan Assessed *[AL-SAFIR 17 Feb]* 7
Minister Denies Restrictions on Foreign Reporters *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 21 Feb]* 9
Security Reportedly Penetrates 'Terrorist' Groups *[AL-AHALI 16 Feb]* 10
Other Criminals Captured *[MENA]* 10

Libya

Clinton Remarks About Libyan 'Threat' Examined *[JANA]* 11
Al-Qadhdhafi Lauds Husayn's Role in Yemeni Accord *[Tripoli Radio]* 11

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Kuwait

Government Recalls Envoy From Qatar; Relations 'Tense' *[MENA]* 12

Yemen

Clashes Reported Between North, South; Reaction Noted 12
Units of Former Armies Involved *[Jerusalem International]* 12

Incident Said 'Contained' *[Sanaa Radio]* 12
Four Dead, 20 Wounded in Clash *[AFP]* 12
Sources: Situation 'Close' to 'Exploding' *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 13
'Drive' To End Conflict Under Way *[AFP]* 13
Ambush Reported 22 Feb *[AFP]* 14
Foreign Minister Interviewed on Events *[Cairo International]* 14
Al-Iryani Comments on Accord Signing, Other Issues *[AL-AHRAM 15 Feb]* 15

IRAQ

Ramadan: Country Willing To Normalize Ties With U.S. *[AL-RA'Y 23 Feb]* 16
Iranian Pilots Land in Kurdistan Seeking Asylum *[London AL-HAYAH 21 Feb]* 16
'Udayy 'Temporarily' Running Industry Ministry *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 22 Feb]* 17
Saddam Decorates Ba'th Party, RCC Members *[Baghdad Radio]* 17
Republican Guards Killed by Black Market Dealers *[AL-BILAD 23 Feb]* 18
Government Sabotage Plans Reported in Kurdistan *[KUNA]* 18
Brotherhood Statement on Syria, Other Issues *[Voice of Arab Syria]* 18

ISRAEL

Rabin on Progress of Palestinian-Israeli Talks *[AL-AHRAM 19 Feb]* 21
Peres on Cairo Talks, Christopher Shuttle Mission *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 25
Peres on Withdrawal Date, Paris Talks, Prisoners *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 25
IDF Withdrawal Completion Slated for May *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
Darawshah Comments on Goals of Syria Visit *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 20 Feb]* 26
Editorial Views 'Mute Dialogue' With Syria *[HA'ARETZ 20 Feb]* 27
Netanyahu Camp Wins Majority in Secretariat Vote *[HA'ARETZ 20 Feb]* 27
High Turnout Reported in NRP Registration Campaign *[HA'ARETZ 20 Feb]* 28
NRP: Arabs Establishing 'Settlements' in Valley *[Jerusalem TV]* 28
Technology Firm Selling Russian Satellite Photographs *[HA'ARETZ 22 Feb]* 28

JORDAN

Abu-Nidal 'Terrorists' Charged in Diplomat's Murder 30
AFP Reports 15 Arrests 30
Other Members Apprehended *[AKHIR KHABAR 22-23 Feb]* 30
'Plots,' Iranian Link Revealed *[AL-BILAD 23 Feb]* 30
Yasir 'Arafat Praises King's Efforts on Yemen *[Amman Radio]* 31
King Receives Qatari Cable on Yemeni Accord *[Amman TV]* 32
Al-Majali Briefs Cabinet on Yemeni Reconciliation *[Amman Radio]* 32
Yemeni Accord Proves Ability To Settle Disputes *[AL-DUSTUR 21 Feb]* 32
Saudi Aid To Jerusalem's Islamic Shrines Hailed *[Amman Radio]* 32
Al-Majali on French Minister's Visit, Bombings *[Cairo International]* 33
Displaced Persons Policy Coordinated With PLO *[JORDAN TIMES 19 Feb]* 34

LEBANON

U.S. Ambassador, Delegation Meet al-Hariri, Others 36
Al-Hariri Receives Entourage *[VOM]* 36
Israeli Warning in U.S. Message *[Beirut Radio]* 36
Hambley Confers With Berri *[VOM]* 36
Three-Round 'Summit' in Damascus Detailed *[VOL]* 36
Security Meeting Discusses Israeli 'Attacks' *[Beirut Radio]* 37
Mirhij on Israel's Intentions, Resistance *[RFL]* 37
Israel Reportedly Annexes 'Vast Areas' *[AL-'AHD 11 Feb]* 38
FRC Reportedly Provides Protection for Deputy *[AL-SHIRA' 21 Feb]* 38
Palestinian Killed in Sidon for 'Moral Reasons' *[VOL]* 38

SYRIA

Announcement Made Concerning Basil al-Asad's Duties *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 22 Feb]* 39
Former al-Asad 'Rival' Reportedly Freed From Jail *[AFP]* 39
Al-Hirawi, al-Asad Discuss Peace, Other Issues 39
Coordination Needs Discussed *[VOL]* 39
Regional Conditions Examined *[Damascus TV]* 39
No 'Separate Peace Accords' Pledged *[WAKH]* 39
Paper Accuses Israel of Hampering U.S.-Syria Ties *[AFP]* 40
Al-Shar' Receives Romanian Official, Message *[SANA]* 40
Al-Asad Receives Message From Pakistan's Bhutto *[Damascus Radio]* 40

SOUTH ASIA

Iran

Ministry Spokesman Comments on Sending Troops to Bosnia *[IRNA]* 41
Leader Says Time 'Appropriate' Time for Rushdie Sentence *[IRNA]* 41
Deputies Vote on Candidate for Culture Minister *[IRNA]* 41
Mirsalim Appointment Favored *[Tehran Radio]* 42
Mirsalim Comments *[IRNA]* 42
Bilateral Cooperation Discussed With Australia *[IRNA]* 42
Commentary Decries U.S. Actions in Sudan *[Tehran Radio]* 43
Commentary Examines Situation in Algeria, Violence *[Tehran Radio]* 43
Tehran Views U.S.-North Korean-IAEA Relations *[Tehran Radio]* 43
Trial of KEYHAN-E HAVA'I Managing Director Begins *[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I 26 Jan]* 44
New IRI School Opens in Damascus *[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I 22 Dec]* 44
* More New Appointments to Offices Announced *[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I 12 Jan]* 45
* New Appointments to Various Offices Announced *[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I 5 Jan]* 45
* Radio Communications Inaugurated in Chah Bahar *[KEYHAN-E HAVA'I 29 Dec]* 45
Cable TV Operation Depends on Voice, Vision Approval *[SALAM 19 Jan]* 45

Arab-Israeli Talks

Palestinian Delegate Views 'Tangible Progress'

NC2202162694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 22 Feb (MENA)—Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the implementation of "Gaza-Jericho First" agreement continued today.

Palestinian and Israeli sources said the current round of talks is being held in a positive atmosphere. They noted a common desire to achieve progress.

Hasan 'Usfur, deputy head of the Palestinian delegation in the Security Committee, told MENA that in yesterday's session, the negotiators completed discussion of a number of issues, notably the deployment of the Palestinian police force in the Palestinian autonomous regions, especially around the Israeli settlements.

Joint Palestinian-Israeli patrols on the side roads (which link the Israeli settlements with the main Gaza road leading to Jerusalem) and on the road between Gaza and Jericho were also discussed, he said. Those subjects, he added, were discussed within the scope of the joint security draft agreement reached in Taba during the recent round of negotiations.

'Usfur said the size of the Palestinian police force in Gaza and Jericho will be discussed today.

It should be noted that the Palestinians want the force to consist of 10,000 personnel, while Israel want it to be around 6,000 strong.

A compromise of an 8,000-strong force is expected.

'Usfur said the negotiators also discussed yesterday a general amnesty for Palestinian detainees in accordance with a timetable ending before 13 July, the date when the implementation of the actual self-rule plan begins.

Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Israel and the occupied territories on Wednesday submitted to chief Palestinian negotiator Dr. Nabil Sha'th a list of 9,400 Palestinian detainees.

The Palestinians are also demanding the return of 68 Palestinians deported by Israel during the Palestinian intifadah.

'Usfur said the Civilian Affairs Committee postponed discussions of the transfer of water authority from the Israelis to the Palestinians and on water sharing to the next round because the Israeli water expert did not attend the talks.

'Usfur said discussions on the transfer of authority on antiquities have been completed. He stressed the importance of transferring this power to the Palestinians and also the importance of transferring the authority on government lands and the property of absentees to the self-rule authority.

The negotiators also discussed town organizing and planning within the transfer of the public works authority. They also discussed the transfer of the general communications authority.

Palestinian sources in the Civilian Affairs Committee stressed that tangible progress has been achieved in the current round. They noted that to date the transfer of some 30 authorities to the Palestinians has been achieved.

The Palestinian sources said the next round, which will begin in Taba on Monday, will be decisive because it will tell whether a final round can be held in Cairo with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin signing the executive agreement on self-rule in Gaza and Jericho first.

The current round of Palestinian-Israeli talks opened yesterday morning under the chairmanship of Palestinian President's adviser Nabil Sha'th and Israeli Deputy Chief of Staff General Amnon Shahaq.

This round is expected to conclude tomorrow, Wednesday.

Gaps in Security Talks 'Unbridgeable'

TA2202192894 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Serious differences of opinion erupted today in the Cairo security talks. An Israeli delegate said today that the gaps in the positions of the sides are unbridgeable and that yet another meeting between Peres and 'Arafat will be needed. Our correspondent Roni Daniyel has learned that Israel rejected the PLO's demand to release all 9,000 Palestinian prisoners.

In the Civilian Affairs Committee, on the other hand, significant progress has been reported in most issues.

'Arafat, Rabin To Sign Civilian Transfer Agreement

NC2202213894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2110 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 22 Feb (MENA)—The Cairo newspaper AL-AKHBAR has reported that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin will meet in Cairo within 15 days or after the 'Id al-Fitr holiday to sign the final agreement to transfer civilian authority.

In its issue for tomorrow, Wednesday, the newspaper said that Dr. Nabil Sha'th, adviser to Palestinian president, will hold a news conference tomorrow at noon to discuss the results of the Cairo round of negotiations.

Minister on 'Real Difficulties' in Economic Talks

TA2202153894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Referring to the economic talks with the Palestinians in Paris, Finance Minister Avraham Shohat said they have run into real difficulties

owing to the fact that the PLO delegates presented new positions which are incompatible with the understandings reached in the previous rounds of negotiations. In his meeting with Abu-al-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'] tomorrow, Shohat said, he will seek to clarify whether the PLO officially changed its positions.

Minister Shohat believes a change of policy may be needed, and instead of open economies, a decision will be made to close the economies of Israel and the autonomy to each other.

Palestinian Affairs

Opposition 'Alliance' Meets Despite Hamas Rebuff

Meeting Agenda Detailed

PM2202152594 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Feb 94 p5

[Text] Damascus, AL-HAYAH—Leaders and representatives of the "Alliance of Palestinian Forces" [APF], which is opposed to the Oslo agreement, yesterday evening held their first meeting since the PLO and Israel signed the Cairo agreement and following the rejection last week by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) of the call made by four of the [opposition] factions which are part of the PLO for an APF meeting at leadership level.

Palestinian sources have confirmed to AL-HAYAH that Hamas did not respond to the call for an extraordinary meeting after the Cairo agreement was signed. The call was made in the name of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front [PPSF], and the Palestine Liberation Front [PLF]. They said that not holding the meeting would be "a violation of the APF's bylaws which commit members to attend any meeting called for by at least four factions."

The sources added that the four factions submitted a plan for the reactivation of the role of the opposition alliance, the aim of which was to foil the "Gaza-Jericho" agreement. They revealed that the plan includes the following four points:

1. Formation of a national and Islamic command for the intifadah inside the occupied territory. Some parties have reservations about the formation of such a command for security reasons related to the difficulty of coordination among the military wings of the factions. The plan urges parctical steps because of the Cairo security agreement which "is harmful to the security of the factions in the occupied territory."

2. A call for people's conferences. This issue has not been resolved because while the PLO factions want an organizational role that would produce leaderships from the Palestinian diaspora and the occupied territory, Hamas is opposed to such conferences or to restriction of the task to just "mobilization," and it is suspicious of such conferences.

PPSF sources have told AL-HAYAH: "Even if Hamas rejected the initiation of such conferences, we would begin work" along with the other three factions.

3. Initiation of political and informational steps as well as contacts with the leaders of the Arab and Islamic states with the aim of strengthening the position against the agreement.

4. Discussion of some APF organizational issues. PPSF sources said: "We will accept no obstructionist formula. There must be effective moves."

The same sources said that the Israeli forces recently arrested a number of military activitists from the organizations opposed to the "Gaza-Jericho" agreement. PPSF Secretary General Khalid 'Abd-al-Majid was yesterday informed of the arrest of the PPSF's military commander in Gaza. He sees the "arrest campaign as an initial result of the Cairo agreement."

Meanwhile, sources of the PFLP, which is led by George Habash, have denied any PFLP intention to move to the occupied territory and also denied discharging some of its cadres. They told AL-HAYAH that the PFLP "differentiates between moving the decisionmaking to the occupied territory and moving its cadres. Although we are passing through a financial crisis, it clings to every member of its cadres. The magazine AL-HADAF (the PFLP's mouthpiece) still appears weekly."

Hamas Criticizes Framework

TA2202193194 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 22 Feb 94 pp 1, 18

[Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS—Hamas [Islamic Resistance Moement] has criticized the Palestinian opposition alliance's current framework.

Ibrahim Ghawshah, the movement's official spokesman, said: We in Hamas consider the Palestinian alliance framework to be incompatible with what Hamas has endeavored for. He added: This is a compromise framework that does not fulfill the desired goals.

Ghawshah, who recently participated in the Alliance of Palestinian Forces' meetings in Damascus on 19 and 20 February, called for changing the current alliance framework, which he said was "a temporary framework that should be changed." He noted that the Palestinian forces must work to draw up a formula for setting up "an elected Palestinian parliament—just as in all democratic states—that truly expresses the Palestinian people's stance on all issues pertaining to their destiny and future."

Ghawshah affirmed Hamas' refusal to regard "popular conferences" as a political authority from which a representative assembly emanates. He said that this formula "is a manifestation of part of the people. We believe that there must be a general manifestation. This is precisely the bone of contention between the democratic-leftist factions."

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine had

called for convening conferences in Palestinian populated areas with the aim of choosing a leadership that represents the Palestinians.

On the recent meetings of the alliance central leadership in Damascus, Ghawshah said: Three issues were discussed at the meetings. First, internal arrangements of the alliance. Second, the rules of these arrangements. Third, moves inside the occupied territories as well as among Palestinians in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

Ghawshah said that the meetings discussed "ways of enhancing internal coordination in light of the alliance's defeat in the Gaza medical association elections." He stressed that the defeat stemmed from "lack of coordination among opposition factions."

Ghawshah said that in the meetings "preliminary plans were drawn up for activating the Alliance on the political and popular levels." Agreement was also reached to organize visits by Alliance Forces representatives "in a bid to establish contact with the world in general and the Islamic one in particular on the official and popular levels." He noted that the aim of these visits is "to affirm to the world the Palestinian people's devotion to their land, future, and homeland."

Ghawshah disclosed that an alliance forces internal draft bill will be discussed so that it will be approved by Alliance officials at a meeting whose date will be set shortly.

Hamas Said Seeking To Control Opposition

JN2202164994 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 22 Feb 94 p 27

[Report by Nabil 'Amr]

[Text] The Palestinian factions that form the Damascus-based alliance of Palestinian forces, the 10 factions, are displeased with the actions of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. Their dissatisfaction is based not only on Hamas' lack of seriousness in coordinating with the other factions in political and organizational contexts, but also on its militant activities inside the occupied territories in general, and the Gaza Strip in particular.

According to information made available to AL-DUSTUR on the atmosphere at the meetings of the alliance forces in Damascus, the doubts of these forces have risen to a level where they do not hesitate to ask a suspicious question; namely: What does Hamas wish to achieve with its policy, which seeks to impose Hamas as a custodian of the other members of the alliance—the same members that suffered from Fatah's custodianship within the framework of the PLO?

AL-DUSTUR telephoned sources close to the central command of the alliance forces in Damascus. These sources told AL-DUSTUR that Hamas is trying to polish its image and deliberately seeks to complicate the dialogue with the other factions in the alliance. It wants to avoid dialogue on one substantial issue—Hamas' attempts to appoint itself an alternative to Fatah in the new alliance, as well as an alternative to the PLO. These moves are rejected by the other nine factions of the new alliance, which sought, and still seek, to hold a dialogue with Hamas. They want a dialogue in order to establish a political platform for their movement and create flexibility on the basis of participation, not through Hamas' political tutelage.

These sources said the recent meetings in Damascus on Saturday [19 February] and Sunday went beyond the standard and did not conceal the worries of some factions over Hamas' rejected intentions. They raised the issue very frankly and confronted Hamas representatives, who tried to evade and refute these allegations, stressing that they do not wish to impose hegemony or become an alternative to the PLO. A close source to the alliance said the position of Hamas representatives reminds one of the Egyptian proverb "I hear what you say, I like it; but when I see your action, I wonder." A source who is very close to the alliance command explains why he used that proverb. He said Hamas is undermining the two most important tracks for the alliance. Hamas refused to establish a unified command for the intifadah inside the occupied territories, which would be open to all Palestinian forces opposing the Oslo agreement signed by the PLO and Israel on 13 September 1993 and to every Palestinian who believes in the intifadah as the means to realize the Palestinian people's national rights.

The source said that the second issue is that Hamas rejected a matter already agreed upon; namely, mobilizing the Palestinian people and the forces that oppose the agreement through people's conferences. These conferences would lead to a general Palestinian people's congress of representatives from Palestinian groups, as nominated by the people's conferences.

The source said that although the Palestinian people are coordinating to face the occupation and are working through the intifadah with unprecedented coordination, Hamas is of the opinion that coordination is better than establishing a leadership center for the alliance. Hamas also proposes people's rallies instead of organized people's conferences. These conferences will lead to the formation of a political framework for the alliance. The Palestinian people have lost any interest in speech rallies.

The same official, who did not want to be identified, said that the independent and historical Palestinian leaderships that reject the Oslo agreement and want the alliance to appear as an organized Palestinian opposition political force have expressed indignation because four months have been lost in a "dialogue of the deaf" among the alliance forces. Four months have gone by without reaching an organized framework within which the Palestinian forces that oppose the Oslo agreement and which believe that the intifadah is the only way to respond to this agreement can be grouped. Hamas wants to remind the Palestinian people, political forces, and organizations who have lost interest in the PLO's method of domination, of the old methods of Yasir 'Arafat's Fatah organization, which used to impose itself on the other Palestinian groups that formed the PLO.

While describing relations among the alliance's forces as cold and paralyzed, the official said that the only agreement was to effect a joint approach toward certain Arab and Islamic states. He said that the Hamas representatives in the alliance leadership denied any knowledge that Hamas groups on the Gaza Strip abducted, tortured, and killed a Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] youth in Khan Yunus and claimed that their policies are based on noninterference in the internal affairs of others.

A DFLP official in Amman told us that reports available to him confirm that a group from Hamas is behind the Khan Yunus killing and that there are more than 15 youth abduction cases in Gaza over the past two weeks of which nine youths were killed. Our sources in Damascus say that the question of the lack of law and order in Gaza took four hours of discussion in the alliance meetings. The killing of the DFLP member prompted the formation of a committee to investigate the killing under Talal Naji of the Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine—General Command with the membership of DFLP and Hamas representatives.

Four Executive Members Oppose Cairo Agreement

NC1902181394 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 19 Feb 94

[Text] Four radical members of the PLO Executive Committee have pledged to prevent the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli Cairo agreement, saying it is a catastrophe for the Palestinians and involves very serious concessions.

The four Palestinian officials are: 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; Taysir Khalid, member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; Mahmud Isma'il, member of the Arab Liberation Front; and 'Abdallah Hurani, an independent Executive Committee member.

Hawatimah: PLO Leadership Opposes Accord Referendum

TA2202193394 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 20 Feb 94 pp 1, 18

[By Rashid Hilal]

[Excerpt] Damascus, Ramallah—Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, has affirmed that his faction will continue to participate in the current Palestine National Council [PNC]. He said, however, that this participation hinges on a call to rebuild all PLO institutions on a democratic and elected coalition basis and with national common denominators.

In an interview with AL-QUDS, Hawatimah said that this basis will ensure a serious commitment to and compliance with the decisions of the PLO's legislative and executive institutions. Hawatimah disclosed that he had invited the Palestinian leadership to discuss the Oslo-Cairo agreement and hold a referendum over this agreement, but the invitation was turned down. Hawatimah said that he favors a historic settlement on the basis of two states—one Arab Palestinian and the other Jewish Israeli—in accordance with the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the return of the refugees on the basis of UN Resolution 194.

He added: This is what I asked for in my recent meetings with U.S. and Russian delegations in Damascus. He said: In these meetings I called on the delegations to cooperate with us in holding a Palestinian referendum, inside and outside the occupied territories, on the Oslo-Cairo agreement.

Hawatimah said: We are calling for evolution toward popular legitimacy by convening popular conferences in the homeland and the diaspora. This should lead to the holding of a unified national conference which would draw up a political program and choose a new leadership—in a spirit of democracy and criticism—that enjoys the people's support. The conference would also elect a new National Council, which in turn would rebuild all PLO institutions on democratic and coalition bases.

Hawatimah indicated that the Palestinian negotiating leadership is refraining from convening the current PNC because most of the council members oppose the Oslo-Cairo agreement. [passage omitted]

Radio Views Ability To Achieve Independence

JN2202210594 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] Dear brothers: Those with sure steps are unshakable. The Palestinian people under the PLO have the right to walk with sure steps. This is because they have faith in their invincible, strong, and unconquerable will. They are sure of their steps toward a free independent Palestinian state. The Palestinian people's self-confidence is drawn from, among other things, their national unity and great intifadah, which gives the Palestinian national consciousness an idea about its future prospects, and qualifies it to proceed with efforts to build the future. At present, the Palestinian people are about to take firm and decisive steps toward independence. The Palestinian people under the PLO have made preparations for all eventualities. They are ready to thwart all obstacles that could stand in their way, preventing them from achieving their sublime objectives. This requires, among other things, enhanced national unity and further vigilance against any malicious instigation promoting discord, a pestilence that has failed in its attempts to plague the Palestinian national consciousness and the Palestinian national unity since the inception of our liberation march.

O masses of our lofty people, let self-confidence and the giant national will be among the slogans of this phase while we proceed firmly toward the extrication of our legitimate national rights to achieve total independence. While looking forward to the future, which we are bound to

extricate, let us repeat with our leader Abu-'Ammar the following verse: Those with sure steps are unshakable. Yes, our people are walking the path leading to the state of Palestinian right and truth, unified and united. Their steps are unfaltering.

Talk Warns Against Enemy's 'Intrigues,' Rumors

JN2302111394 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] Brothers: As we continue to forge the epic, create the miracle, escalate our great struggle, and wage fierce confrontations and [word indistinct] the homeland from the north to the south, and from the sea to the river with the efforts of our brave hands, our heroic masses, our blessed intifadah actions, and the strength of our powerful march toward decisive and certain victory, with Almighty God's help, and as we move from one stage to another, advance from one achievement to another, and from one creativity to another more brilliant creativity—while we are doing this and more—we should beware of the occupying enemy and be always and daily on maximum alert for its black plots and criminal fingers that are trying to encroach on our past and present.

Not only is this arrogant enemy fighting us with ordinary, plastic, and rubber bullets. Not only is it fighting us with gas, poisonous, and nerve gas bombs. Not only is it using the ugliest and dirtiest crimes in the history of mankind. This enemy is also fighting us with intrigues—malicious intrigues which try to undermine our self-confidence. You, kinsfolk and beloved brothers, know the occupying enemy's method of cheap and black intrigues. The occupying enemy is behind all the forged and distorted statements. It is behind most tribal differences. The enemy is behind most fabricated, false stories, and rumors against any of our brothers or group.

Therefore, let us beware of the enemy, because this enemy, which fires treacherous bullets at the chests of our children, women, magnificent young men and girls is the same party that directs intrigues to our spirits and morale in a bid to deal a strong blow to us.

Let us beware of this criminal enemy, let us make the enemy's arrows and hateful and black schemes backfire. Let us be patient, let us resist and arm ourselves with awareness, and hoist the banners of national confidence. Let us bring double retaliation and answer [words indistinct].

The intifadah is continuing, its voice is louder, its flag is higher, and its march is the strongest. Hail to you the sons of our great people. Hail to you and to your comprehensive awareness, and deep vision of things, the courage of your [word indistinct] , the strength of your hands, and the greatness of your sacrifices. Gods' victory is close.

Algeria

Foreign Minister Says 'No Rift' With Libya

LD2302094594 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0845 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Algiers, 23 Feb 94 (JANA)—Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri, made a statement to the JANA correspondent yesterday in which he stressed the importance of Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi's visit to Algeria [word indistinct] and its outcome at the bilateral level as well as at the level of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU], pointing out that contacts between brothers will always open new vistas.

He added: Strong relations have always existed between Algeria and Libya, and contacts between the two fraternal countries are necessary. The meeting between brother al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi and President Zeroual has given us a new opportunity to meet again in the near future to examine all topics of mutual interest at the bilateral and Maghreban levels as well as our Arab and Islamic nations, he said.

He added: There are a number of topics to be examined. They require us to unite our efforts. And this is what we discussed with Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi.

He stressed that there is no rift between Algerian and Libyan brothers that can be manipulated by opposition forces. And this should be the main outcome of this visit. We are hoping that the coming days will witness intensified contacts to examine our affairs with clarity, resolve them, and lay down a joint plan of action to resolve all related matters, he pointed out.

Two FIS Members Released From Prison

LD2202175394 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] We have just received the following: Citing a source close to Blida court, the Algerian Press Service reported that Ali Djeddi and Abdelkader Boukhamkham, members of the Echoura Council of the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front, have been released from prison.

Newspaper Strike Ends; Dailies To Reappear

LD2202230794 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Numerous national newspapers, which disappeared from the newsstands due to the strike at the central Algiers printing company, will start reappearing beginning this evening because this strike has come to an end. [passage omitted]

The employees of the Central Algiers Printing Company have been on an open strike since yesterday. This was due to a disagreement with management regarding the review of the salary grid and the implementation of the collective agreement.

This strike had a quick effect, which resulted in the dailies EL MASA and LE SOIR D'ALGERIE not being published since yesterday evening and the absence of about seven national dailies from the newsstands today. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Minister Denies Government Under 'Threat,' Comments

TA2202152694 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Feb 94 pp A1, A10

[Report by Gay Bekhor and Aluf Ben]

[Excerpt] In an interview with HA'ARETZ on 21 February, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa reacted to the various publications which have been saying that Mubarak's regime is under a threat: "This is idle talk, an interpretation based on wrong assumptions, a serious exaggeration, a misunderstanding of the reality in Egypt, and a significant deviation from the truth."

This is the first reaction by an Egyptian official to reports published in the British weekly SUNDAY TIMES according to which U.S. intelligence agencies have concluded that there is a real chance that President Mubarak will not be able to hold on to his position due to the pressure of Islamic terror.

Foreign Minister Musa rejected these reports outright. "This is not Islamic extremism, but instead extremism in the name of Islam. These extremists have nothing to do with Islam." Lashing out at religious terror elements in Egypt several days ago, Husni Mubarak made similar remarks.

Asked for the best way to handle Islamic terror in his country, Musa said: "The only way is to have terrorism curbed by the government and the security forces, which they are doing. At the same time, the reasons for this extremism are known. The long-term economic reform plan will take care of the extremism."

During the interview Minister Musa asked if we would use the term "terror activity," and not "Islamic terror activity." He explained that "the government is now taking very powerful steps on the ground in terms of security and maintaining public order. I believe, therefore, that terror activity will diminish."

Musa did not specify the number of supporters of the Egyptian terror and the extent of their influence, but said: "I believe the figures are on the decline because the reforms and the determined activities against those gangs will clearly diminish their abilities."

Answering a question on who is behind terror activity in Egypt and who should be blamed for it, he said: "Many domestic and external elements are behind the terror. I would rather not elaborate." When asked whether it is Iran, he said he would not mention names. He repeated that "the claim that the activities of the terror gangs in

Egypt might destabilize the very existence of the current regime is definitely an exaggerated interpretation."

U.S. evaluation elements have estimated that Mubarak's regime is in danger, but amended their assessment and now believe that the Egyptian administration is stable enough and has managed to develop the appropriate tools for dealing with fundamentalist terror.

A report received in Jerusalem several days ago says that the updated assessments of the U.S. evaluation elements indicates that the Egyptian regime is basically stable and able to deal with crises. The evaluation also says that Egypt has a long tradition of and broad support for the government which has managed to absorb shocks in the past, such as after the death of President 'Abd-al-Nasir in 1970 and the murder of President Anwar al-Sadat in 1981.

According to the U.S. evaluation, the Egyptian regime will endure even if Mubarak personally loses power.

The evaluation elements disagree on whether fundamentalism is a different phenomenon in each Middle East country or whether there exists a "domino effect" and mutual influence of fundamentalist Islam acts in Algiers, Egypt, Jordan, and the Gaza Strip.

The annual intelligence report, presented to the government some four weeks ago by Major General Uri Sagi, head of the Israel Defense Forces Intelligence Branch, says that fundamentalism would be a source of concern in the long run if it succeeds in toppling the regime of one of the neighboring countries such as Egypt or Jordan. At the same time it does not pose an immediate threat. The report states that there is no danger that the Egyptian Government would fall this year.

Israeli analysts are following the situation in Egypt and have recently presented the political echelons with reports on the Muslim movements there, but did not find that the Egyptian Government is in danger. [passage omitted]

Musa on Bosnia, Southern Sudan, Events in Yemen

NC2202174794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1512 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 22 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stressed that Egypt firmly and decisively supports the territorial integrity of Sudan and opposes the separation of its south.

Any attempts to separate southern Sudan from its northern part, whether by the north or the south of Sudan or by foreign quarters, will be faced by a clear Egyptian opposition, he said.

Musa was commenting today on reports of attempts to separate the south of Sudan.

On the escalation in Yemen, especially after signing the agreement between the Yemeni president and his deputy, the foreign minister said: This is unfortunate, especially as it comes after the signing of an agreement between Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid. This indicates that the situation is serious. After only a few hours, the signed document had failed to achieve its purpose. Egypt hopes the contents of the Pledge and Accord document will be respected and implemented.

Musa asked: If a document is not respected, then what is the point in arranging celebrations and protocols for signing agreements that are not implemented?

On the situation in Bosnia, Musa said all reports reaching the Foreign Ministry, as well as the NATO statement, show that the overwhelming majority of heavy weapons have been withdrawn and that some other weaponry has been placed under UN supervision. There is no longer a threat there.

He said NATO had reaffirmed that the ultimatum and all other decisions stand, in case any of these guns or missile batteries return to their positions or if Sarajevo is fired on, even if it is not hit. NATO also stressed its commitment to protect the seclusion zone, the besieged area, and the UN forces, Musa noted.

Country's Stand on U.S. Actions in Sudan Assessed

NC2202113894 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 17 Feb 94 p 12

[Report by Amin Radwan in Cairo: "Rapprochement Between Cairo and Khartoum To Prevent Partition of Sudan Following Renewed Calls for U.S. Intervention and Support for the Secessionists"]

[Text] The problem of southern and western Sudan and the attempts to secede them from the north—according to last year's Washington declaration—remain a fundamental point of difference between the foreign policies of Egypt and the United States. But, at the same time it is a point of agreement for Cairo and Khartoum that Sudan should stay united with all its seven provinces.

The repeated U.S. attempts to convince Egypt of the need for the secession of southern Sudan has expanded to include Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda. In the past three months, the U.S. Administration exerted intensive efforts to convince these three countries' presidents to support the right to self-determination for the inhabitants of south Sudan and of Jabal al-Nubah in western Sudan. Harry Johnston, vice chairman of the African Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, played an important role in these efforts. This prompted Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi to invite Sudanese President 'Umar al-Bashir for talks in Nairobi on 18 February. Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi had already accused Khartoum of interfering in Ethiopian affairs and warned it against attempting to export terrorism to Ethiopia and Eritrea through Islamic groups.

The three countries' presidents had received U.S. reports about the southern Sudanese people's need for military and material support to confront the Sudanese Government, who has succeeded, according to these reports, in

supporting and increasing the strength of the Eritrean al-Jihad Movement. This group is hostile to the Eritrean Transitional Government in Asmara, the Somali Union Organization in northeast Somalia, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromo in Ethiopia, the Islamic Union Forces in "Ogaden," and the Islamic groups in Kenya.

Egypt's Foreign Ministry sources pointed out that the Al-Bashir-Moi meeting in Nairobi will be followed by meetings with the two leaders of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army [SPLA], John Garang and Riak Machar, who signed the agreement in Washington last year on working together to obtain the right to self-determination for southern and western Sudan.

These sources stressed that Harry Johnston told the three African presidents that one of the aims behind the dispatch of U.S. forces to Somalia in the "Restore Hope" operation was to resolve the southern Sudan problem within the framework that maintains security and stability in the Horn of Africa region.

The sources added that the U.S. interest in south Sudan is Khartoum's support for the Islamic movements and exporting them to neighboring countries. To make the Sudanese Government stop this support, the U.S. Administration sought to change the approach to solving the problem in the south from negotiations to the overt call for its secession from the north. For this purpose, the U.S. Administration recently held direct contacts with some southern leaders, including Machar, to prepare for large-scale military operations against the Sudanese forces to achieve self-determination for the southerners. Machar recently called for international intervention in the south to stop what he called the genocide of Christian civilians at the hands of the "Islamic" Sudanese Government.

The sources noted that Cairo learned of the U.S. contacts with the secessionists in the south and the U.S. Administration's inclination to move U.S. forces from Somalia to southern Sudan. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry summoned the U.S. ambassador in Cairo to ask about these contacts and the nature of the role U.S. forces deployed in Somalia will play in the south.

The same sources noted that the U.S. ambassador's answer, conveyed to President Husni Mubarak at the end of December, pointed out that the goal of the U.S. military reinforcements in the south is to confront centers of "terrorism" in Khartoum, which represent a threat to security and stability in neighboring states. According to the same sources, the U.S. ambassador went beyond this explanation when he asked President Mubarak to back these U.S. efforts by requesting direct Egyptian participation in any military operations that may be carried out against the Khartoum Government. He expressed his country's readiness to work out military arrangements that could secure the participation of some Egyptian military units, particularly since the U.S. State Department appreciates the embarrassment Egypt could face as a result of a potential direct military confrontation with Sudanese Government troops.

Egyptian Foreign Ministry sources have disclosed that the number of U.S. troops prepared for dispatch to southern Sudan is 4,000, along with equipment and modern military aircraft. In early January, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry learned of a deal involving the supply of advanced U.S. weapons to the rebel troops in southern Sudan via Israel.

According to Arab diplomatic reports from Washington, direct U.S. intervention in the south is serious. The sources added that Britain had agreed to join in this intervention. Some British societies, sponsored by Baroness Cox, have invited leaders of the Sudanese opposition and the two wings of SPLA to "a meeting on Sudan" to be held in the House of Commons in London this month. The meeting will discuss the two main issues; the political and the humanitarian problems in southern Sudan.

The same sources disclosed that the United States will use some military bases in neighboring African states as launching pads for attacks against the Sudanese troops in the southern areas, particularly in the Equatoria Province, Bahr El Ghazal Province, and the Upper Nile Province.

An expert on African affairs at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry has pointed out that the objective of these U.S. military preparations is not just to protect the U.S. interests in the Horn of Africa but to cover up the failure of the operation in Somalia. This failure has been a major political setback for the new U.S. Administration and has resulted in a 30 percent drop in the U.S. public's support for President Bill Clinton's foreign policy. President Clinton personally wishes to score a major victory in his foreign policy similar to that achieved by former President George Bush during the Gulf war. The Egyptian expert added that, aware of his mistake in settling matters inside Somalia, President Bill Clinton was convinced of his friend Harry Johnston's advice that a major military victory over Sudanese Government troops is possible, particularly since the southerners will provide all the necessary military assistance to make the U.S. role in this mission successful.

The expert adds that Clinton expects the southern Sudan operation to last two months. During the operation, the U.S. Administration will declare the right to self-determination for the southerners within a state independent from the north.

The Egyptian expert points out that the United States decided to take part in the operation in Somalia to create permanent posts after the restoration of stability in that country. To achieve this objective, U.S. military officials visited Somalia successively to determine the locations of the posts. They initially chose seven posts and held exchanges with some Somali leaders. However, six of those leaders, including President Ali Mahdi, did not approve the establishment of the posts on Somali territory.

The Egyptian expert disclosed that the U.S. Administration recently went back on its decision temporarily to build military bases in Somalia lest these bases be sabotaged by the Somalis. Hence, Johnston advised that these bases

could possibly be set up in southern Sudan as this move enjoys the approval of the southern rebels leaders, particularly since Machar previously called for establishing secure zones in southern Sudan. The Sudanese Air Force would not be allowed to overfly these zones, similar to northern and southern Iraq.

The Egyptian expert pointed out that the idea of building permanent U.S. military bases in southern Sudan is an old one. It was first expressed by former Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush, but they could not implement it because of the instability in southern Sudan. Bill Clinton is now trying to achieve this objective within the context of Washington's statement advocating the southerners' right to self-determination by setting up an independent state.

The Egyptian expert noted that the strategic importance of these bases is to ensure an advance U.S. presence during disturbances and military operations in the African Horn states, adjacent Arab countries, and the Red Sea. Cairo has urgently asked the U.S. Administration not to intervene militarily in the Sudanese problem and not to dispatch U.S. forces from Somalia for this purpose. In its request, Cairo said that supporting the secession of the south from the north is bound to encourage several ethnic groups in Sudan and Ethiopia to take similar measures. This would actually threaten stability in the Horn of Africa.

Sources said that although the U.S. ambassador in Cairo tried to convey his government's assurances that it would not carry out military intervention in Sudan, he said that Washington wants the Egyptian Government to cooperate with it to curb "terrorism," which takes Khartoum as its center, and to support the idea of independence for the south from the north, as it represents the ideal solution to the southerners' suffering and does not harm Egypt's southern security.

This solution would also enable the independent Sudanese southerners to establish good relations with Cairo and to revive joint economic projects, including the Jonglei Canal project, which has been obstructed by the ongoing war. However, Cairo received all these assurances with extreme caution and has not supported the U.S. position on the matter.

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry sources said that the reasons for the U.S. retreat from direct military intervention in the south, which became apparent from the U.S. ambassador's assurances, were the differences that erupted between the secessionist leaders over accepting the U.S. role in the south and the condition of setting up permanent U.S. military bases in their areas. While some, including Machar, backed the establishment of these bases, Garang expressed some reservations.

To narrow the differences between these two leaders, Harry Johnston sought to tell them that the U.S. Administration will make military commitments to the rebel forces. In this context, he effected a reconciliation between Garang and Machar (leader of the Nuer tribes) to get the two leaders to agree on these military commitments, which Washington will make later.

Confirmed Egyptian information noted that Machar approved these military commitments while Garang opposed them and expressed fears about them, and even conveyed these fears to Cairo.

In view of this frenzied activity on the part of Washington to resolve the problem of south Sudan on the basis of self-determination, intensive Egyptian-Sudanese contacts were held at the end of last month during which a message was conveyed from the Egyptian president to his Sudanese counterpart in which he stressed Egypt's support for Sudan in any attempt to partition it. The Egyptian president also underlined the link between Egyptian and Sudanese security.

Egyptian and Sudanese sources in Cairo said that Mubarak's message to al-Bashir left a good impression on Sudanese officials. This led to the two countries' agreement on resolving the Egyptian-Sudanese dispute over the Hala'ib triangle within the framework of the bilateral joint committees and on resolving the differences between them over the issues of terrorism. In this connection, the Sudanese authorities recently built a port on the Red Sea and not in Shalatayn (the disputed area between the two countries) to avoid any disputes and to improve bilateral relations.

As part of Egypt's efforts to achieve a common conception of security interests in the Horn of Africa between Cairo and Washington, President Husni Mubarak contacted the presidents of Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Eritrea, and some Somali leaders in his capacity as OAU chairman. The contacts were designed to underline the importance of the Egyptian role in the Horn of Africa and the possibility of Egypt playing a prominent and direct role in protecting U.S. interests and African countries' interests in this region. This Egyptian role could be the alternative to the direct role that Washington intends to play in southern Sudan.

Although this common concept has not been achieved yet, Washington, according to the African affairs expert in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, has not been convinced of the Egyptian role in this region, especially in Somalia, and has sought to belittle its importance or to marginalize it. Washington is insisting that any action taken in the Horn of Africa has to go through it. But Cairo continues to believe that the problems of the region could be resolved within the framework of the OAU and UN charters, which call for maintaining the territorial integrity of Africa's countries and prohibits their partitioning.

Minister Denies Restrictions on Foreign Reporters

PM2302095594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 21 Feb 94 p 1

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Egyptian Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif has denied that his ministry or other Egyptian authorities intend to take measures to restrict foreign correspondents or representatives of Arab and international newspapers and news agencies operating in Cairo.

Asked about the reports that correspondents may be harassed or restricted, al-Sharif told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: "There is no control, interference, or anything that limits their freedom of movement, or confiscation of their messages or reports...; they are completely free." However, the Egyptian information minister stressed that the state or any authoritative quarter is entitled to draw it to any correspondent's attention if it becomes clear that he insists on reporting untrue news. "A correspondent's freedom does not mean fabricating imaginary stories and falling into the claws of erroneous reports."

The minister warns correspondents not to fall into what he termed the "fax trap." He said: "For two years press and news agency bureaus have been accustomed to receiving statements from illegal or extremist groups by fax. Some correspondents think these statements are a scoop or a reality, but over the past two years nothing of what they threatened to do has happened." Al-Sharif added: "We request nothing of correspondents except the truth, only the truth. They know better than anyone else that they live in security and safety which may be greater than in their own countries."

He said that sources of information are available to them. And with regard to security issues, the Egyptian Interior Ministry has an official spokesman and has allocated telephone numbers for those who want to ascertain information, without any kind of control of interference.

He pointed out that freedom of movement is available to correspondents and that there is the permanent press center, which operates around the clock to serve foreign correspondents and provide them with all the statements and statistics they request.

Security Reportedly Penetrates 'Terrorist' Groups

NC2302083594 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 16 Feb 94 p 1, 8

[Excerpts] At last, the security organs have succeeded in penetrating the terrorist groups, according to a ranking security expert, who added that this development is extremely important. Although the security expert declined to elaborate on the extent of this penetration, he noted that it is semi-comprehensive and is bound to obstruct the terrorists' movements and curb their operations.

The security expert added that the penetration has been expanded to cover most of the terrorist organizations, thus enabling the security services to have an overall picture of these organizations' leaders, members, internal, and external affiliations, centers, and sources of arms and funds.

The security expert, who preferred to remain anonymous, pointed out that the penetration has also enabled the security forces to carry out successful operations that have led to the fall of several terrorist leaders and to strike at the perpetrators of some operations before they were carried out.

The security expert said that this successful development does not mean the end of the terrorists. He cautioned that some absconding members might carry out serious terrorist operations.

The security expert made these statements before the incident in al-Sayyidah Zaynab, on 14 February, during which the following three terrorists were killed: Tharwat Hajjaj, Mustafa Mahmud 'Ali Musa, and 'Atif Khalil 'Id.

Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry has nearly completed a new procedure that would protect prosecution witnesses in terrorist cases and encourage citizens to give any information dealing with terrorist activities to facilitate arrests.

The proposed procedure imposes complete secrecy on persons who give information and intensifies their protection in the event that they become prosecution witnesses. [passage omitted]

A security source said that after the assassination of Sayyid Ahmad Yahya, the prosecution witness in the case of the assassination attempt against Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, a state of fear engulfed prosecution witnesses in other terrorist cases. Some of these witnesses wanted to withdraw their statements. Other witnesses even failed to show up before the interrogation authorities. The interior minister then issued instructions to study the entire situation. [passage omitted]

Other Criminals Captured

NC2202222194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2131 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 22 Feb (MENA)—Extensive security campaigns during the past 24 hours in the slum districts organized by al-Jizah security department have resulted in arresting around 700 people who are suspected of various political and criminal violations.

Brigadier General Sayyid Farid, director of the General Department for al-Jizah Investigations, said that the storming of the slum areas also resulted in the arrest of 145 fugitive extremists from Upper Egypt. The security forces also seized a number of firearms, including three machine guns.

He said that within the framework of instructions from Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi on the need to extensively search for activists, during this campaign, in which most of the security organs participated, the security forces succeeded in resolving many cases, including 15 drug cases of various kinds, and in shutting down numerous drug dens.

The search forces—led by Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Wahhab Khalil, head of the Investigations Department—succeeded in arresting 48 fugitives who were fleeing various sentences for crimes they had committed. They also arrested a number of gangs specializing in robbing houses and stores in all parts of al-Jizah.

The director of the General Department for Investigations noted that the defendants confessed to their crimes and have been referred to the prosecution for interrogation and investigation.

Libya

Clinton Remarks About Libyan 'Threat' Examined

LD2202211494 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1810 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Tripoli, 22 Feb 1994, JANA—U.S. President Clinton said that the Great Jamahiriyah constituted an unusual and exceptional threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

This was said in the report that Clinton presented to the U.S. Congress recently, in which he reviewed the state of emergency that the United States announced toward the Jamahiriyah as of 1986.

The JANA political editor commented on this, saying that what is a cause for amazement in Clinton's statement is that it came from the largest nuclear state in the world against Libya, a peaceful state facing unjust mandatory sanctions for which the U.S. Government itself is the first to be held responsible and that has practiced various pressures through threats and attraction [as received] in order to impose such measures at the UN Security Council.

The editor wondered what the Great Jamahiriyah had done to constitute the danger that the U.S. President mentioned, apart from the fact that it has refused to be a lackey and dependent and has drawn for itself an independent political path based on getting friendly with those that befriend it and hostile toward those that are hostile toward it. It has also rejected infringement upon its sovereignty and its Arab nation. In this framework, it becomes clear that the primary reason behind the report of the U.S. President at this moment is the stance of the Great Jamahiriyah, which has exposed the so-called Gaza and Jericho agreement and the plan to sell Palestine and impose unconditional surrender on the Arabs.

When the U.S. President says that Libya constitutes a danger for U.S. interests, by these interests he means the Israelis, because the U.S. wants Israel to be the most powerful and the Arabs to surrender and submit to their will.

The editor stressed that the U.S. Government must prove this serious accusation before the UN Security Council, which must investigate it. The U.S. Government must prove how Libya constitutes a danger to the United States.

JANA has learned that the secretariat of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation will submit the text of the report that was presented by U.S. President Clinton to the Congress to the Secretariat of the General People's Congress so that it is distributed to the Basic People's Congresses so that every member is well informed of the contents of that report and the serious dimensions and meanings it contains.

Al-Qadhdhafi Lauds Husayn's Role in Yemeni Accord

LD2202192094 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution, Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, has had a phone conversation with King Husayn of Jordan, during which he praised Husayn's role in the reconciliation between the brothers in the Yemeni leadership—in view of the fact that this role was a pan-Arab effort in the context of clearing differences between Arabs within the Arab homeland.

Kuwait

Government Recalls Envoy From Qatar; Relations 'Tense'

NC2302091594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0850 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Kuwait, 23 Feb (MENA)—The Kuwaiti Government has decided to recall its ambassador from Qatar for consultations. Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry officials declined to comment on this step. A responsible source told a MENA correspondent that this recall is routine and does not have other connotations.

However, observers in Kuwait say that the recall of the Kuwaiti ambassador comes in the wake of tense relations between the two countries after Qatari Television over the past few days screened video reports from inside Iraq on the negative effect of the economic blockade imposed on the Iraqi people.

Observers said Qatari Television on Friday carried an interview with Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf. Kuwaiti officials interpreted this action as being tantamount to Qatar's adoption of the Iraqi viewpoint.

The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry on Sunday summoned Qatari Ambassador Ahmad Bin-Ghanim al-Rumayhi and conveyed to him unfriendly and unofficial criticism of the Qatari stand. The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry also expressed apprehension about this rapprochement between Qatar and Iraq and asked him to explain the Qatari view on this subject.

Press reports today said that Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad sent a strongly worded letter to Shaykh Fahim al-Qasimi, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council on the recent rapprochement between Qatar and the Iraqi regime.

Yemen

Clashes Reported Between North, South; Reaction Noted

Units of Former Armies Involved

JN2102162194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1556 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] Clashes erupted in southern Yemen today between two units of the former north Yemeni and south Yemeni armies, despite the fact that a reconciliation accord was signed in Amman yesterday between Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, former president of north Yemen, and his deputy 'Ali Salim al-Bid, former leader of south Yemen. The accord is designed to end the political crisis that has continued for several months in Yemen.

The Yemeni president and his deputy left the Jordanian capital separately this afternoon after holding a prolonged meeting with King Husayn of Jordan.

Security and political sources in Sanaa have said that troops and tanks affiliated with a unit of the former north Yemeni Army are besieging the city of Zinjibar in southern Yemen in the aftermath of clashes with troops affiliated with the former south Yemeni army. The clashes erupted after troops affiliated with the north Yemeni army attempted to detain a colonel affiliated with the south Yemeni Army at a military checkpoint.

Yemeni sources in Amman said at noon today that at least four persons were killed in the clashes between the two sides.

Incident Said 'Contained'

JN2102175494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1710 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] A responsible source at the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff of the Armed Forces has informed the Yemeni News Agency, SABA' that the regrettable military incident that took place in Abyan Governorate was contained this morning. The source added: Once Presidential Council Chairman brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, and Presidential Council Vice Chairman brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid were informed of this incident, they instructed that the incident be contained, that a rapid investigation of the circumstances surrounding it be conducted, and that full compliance with instructions be enforced.

The Military Committee has been asked to monitor the implementation of the instructions, and to take the necessary relevant measures.

The source asserted that this incident will not undermine the joy that has swept our people in the aftermath of the signing of the accord document in Arab Amman, the city of accord and reconciliation, under the sponsorship of His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal and the Jordanian people. Moreover, this incident will not deter all from continuing to mobilize efforts to implement the document of accord in order to build a modern Yemeni state, a state of institutions, law, and order, the source concluded.

Four Dead, 20 Wounded in Clash

NC2102182194 Paris AFP in English 1751 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Sanaa, Feb 21 (AFP)—Rival Yemeni troops clashed Monday leaving four dead and 20 wounded, a Defence Ministry source said.

The fighting broke out a day after country's leaders signed a deal patching up their differences.

A tank was also destroyed when brigades from the north and south fought for an hour in the Abyan region, 100 kilometres (60 miles) east Aden, a source close to Defense Minister Haytham Qasim Tahir said.

Each side accused the other of sparking the clash after moving troops toward the old border between the former North Yemen and poorer South Yemen, which merged in 1990.

On Sunday, Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his southern rival Vice-President 'Ali Salim al-Bid met in the Jordanian capital Amman to sign a deal calling for major economic, political and military reforms.

The accord, aimed at ending a dispute which threatened to split the country, called for withdrawing troops facing each other along the old border and banned troop movements in cities and on main roads.

Monday's fighting ended after the intervention of a military commission that had been set up to implement withdrawals, officials said.

Salim Salih Muhammad, a top YSP [Yemeni Socialist Party] official and member of the Presidential Council, also told AFP that Salih, al-Bid and Jordan's King Husayn had contacted officials in Abyan to restore calm.

King Husayn said Sunday that the accord was "a positive start for Arabs to settle their own differences."

Muhammad accused northern troops of having deployed further south, closer to Aden. But a northern official who asked not to be named alleged that southern troops had moved forward. [passage omitted]

Al-Bid underlined his commitment to the accord despite "reservations and wounds." He said he could visualize the faces of relatives killed in political violence, but "Yemen is dearer to us.

"We are going to turn over a new leaf...and we will start applying this document," Al-Bid added. Salih thanked the United States and European Union for helping in the reconciliation.

Sources: Situation 'Close' to 'Exploding'

JN2202162394 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1600 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Sources close to Defense Minister Haytham Qasim Tahir said in Aden today that the military situation in the southern Abyan region, where armed clashes took place between northern and southern units on 21 February, is close to the point of exploding. The same sources said that the country is now in an undeclared state of war.

The tension follows the signing of an accord agreement last Sunday. The agreement aims to end the political crisis that has been plaguing the country since last August.

'Drive' To End Conflict Under Way

NC2202185994 Paris AFP in English 1720 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Sanaa, Feb 22 (AFP)—Southern officials mounted a diplomatic drive on Tuesday in the Gulf, after troop clashes at home which claimed at least eight lives despite a reconciliation accord between Yemen's rival leaders.

Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, a southerner, met King Fahd in the Saudi capital, while his deputy Salim Salih Muhammad met the Kuwaiti amir, Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, and called for ties to be restored.

They were the first such high-level visits since the 1991 Gulf war, when the conservative monarchies accused Yemen of siding with Iraq and Kuwait broke off relations.

Al-Bid later travelled to Oman while Salih Muhammad went to the United Arab Emirates, where he said the tour was aimed at drumming up support for Yemen after the reconciliation signed on Sunday in Amman by al-Bid and President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, a northerner.

Referring to the clashes which have erupted since the deal, the envoy called on "all parties concerned to help remedy the situation and allow the return of stability."

But an Arab diplomat here, declining to be named, warned that the al-Bid initiative could back-fire and "aggravate the crisis of confidence between the president and his deputy."

Al-Bid is still refusing to return to Sanaa from his southern base of Aden, where he has taken refuge since last August, an official in the president's General People's Congress (GPC) said.

He said the vice president was demanding the arrest and trial of those responsible for the series of political assassinations since the country united in May 1990, most of which have targeted al-Bid's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP).

Since Friday, fighting between rival Yemeni troops has killed at least eight soldiers and created an "explosive" situation which could run out of control, diplomatic and defence ministry sources said.

Seven died in two separate clashes in the south on Monday, the day after the Amman accord calling for major economic, political and military reforms. Another soldier was killed in fighting near Aden airport on Friday.

The accord on decentralization, as demanded by the south, was aimed at ending a political crisis between Salih and al-Bid that threatened the unity of the country.

Despite unity, the two armies have not merged—although northern units have been sent south and vice versa—and tension has grown with troop build-ups along the former frontier.

The situation has become "explosive," with a risk of the fighting spreading across the country, a source close to Defence Minister Haytham Tahir Qasim, a southerner, said after the latest clashes.

Four soldiers were killed and 20 wounded in the town of Lawdar, 100 kilometres (60 miles) northeast of Aden on Monday, diplomatic sources said.

Southern troops dispatched as reinforcements from the port of al-Mukallah fought for several hours with a northern brigade in a battle involving tanks and artillery.

Three other soldiers died Monday when northern forces attacked an administrative building held by southern troops in Zinjibar, 30 kilometres (20 miles) east of Aden, and the capital of Abyan province, the sources said.

Tension flared in Abyan after the president overturned the nomination of a local governor by Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al- 'Attas, a southerner.

A military commission was dispatched to Abyan to sort out the dispute between the rival forces but so far the mission has been a failure, the YSP said.

But the GPC official played down reports of tension, saying the situation in Abyan was calm after the commission's intervention with the backing of the US and French embassies.

"The alarming reports from the YSP are designed to camouflage the actions they are taking that are contrary to the reconciliation accord," he charged.

Ambush Reported 22 Feb

NC2202180394 Paris AFP in English 1754 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, Feb 22 (AFP)—Northern Yemeni troops on Tuesday ambushed and killed 15 soldiers from the rival south, a Yemeni official said here.

The ambush was sprung by a northern brigade at al-'Amaliqah, based in the Abyan region of southern Yemen, the south Yemeni official said in Jordan where the rival leaders signed a reconciliation accord on Sunday.

There was no confirmation from the north.

Foreign Minister Interviewed on Events

NC2302093194 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah in Sanaa by Fawzi al-Jundi in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue from Afar" program—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Jundi] The developments in Yemen following the signing of the pledge and accord document by President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid are the focus of this conversation with Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah. We welcome him to Voice of the Arabs.

[Basindwah] I thank you for phoning me. I wish you and Egypt—its president, government, and people—prosperity, success, stability, and peace in this blessed month of Ramadan, the month of fasting and virtue.

[Al-Jundi] Hours after the signing of the pledge and accord document, news agency reports spoke of clashes between northern and southern Yemeni forces. What is your full assessment of these clashes?

[Basindwah] I want to be true with the listeners of the Voice of the Arabs because the Voice of the Arabs has accustomed us to the truth. Undoubtedly, there are elements in the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] who want to consecrate secession as a fait accompli. Within this context, some forces—the Unity Brigade—moved from Hadramut to the Abyan Province contrary to the agreement banning any military movements. These forces, which fall under the YSP command, moved to Abyan Province to provoke the 'Amaliqah forces. A clash occurred, in which innocent Yemenis died. We do not consider the dead from the south as non-Yemenis and we do not consider the dead from the north as non-Yemenis. In our view, they are all Yemenis and they are the sons of our one people. We must save their blood. We do not want a Yemeni to be killed by another Yemeni. We want to stop the bloodshed. The clash was part of a plan to prevent the signing of the document. We had hoped that 20 February of this year would be the day Yemen overcame its crisis.

[Al-Jundi] While we share with you this hope, it is a fact that both President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid want to contain any crisis that might arise. There are direct orders by both men that these events should be contained.

[Basindwah] Yemen is dear to us. We must safeguard the security and peace of its people. We want stability to prevail throughout our homeland. We do not want any part of the homeland to be exposed to dangers. Yemen's unity does not concern one particular person or party but concerns all Yemenis. In my opinion, any attempt to break up this unity is treason.

[Al-Jundi] Allow me to submit a clearer question. How effective is the pledge and accord document at this particular time?

[Basindwah] I believe all our people have rallied around this document and there is a national consensus on it. However, there are elements who are trying to spoil the good and encouraging atmosphere created by the signing of the pledge and accord document. We must implement this document because it no longer belongs to its signatories but to all the Yemeni people.

[Al-Jundi] The pledge and accord document was signed in the presence of the Arab League secretary general and a representative of Omani Sultan Qabus and under the sponsorship of King Husayn of Jordan. Did the participation of these figures in the reconciliation of the Yemeni factions represent an Arab desire to contain this crisis?

[Basindwah] Undoubtedly, the presence of the Arab League secretary general and the Omani minister of state for foreign affairs as a representative of Sultan Qabus indicates a collective Arab desire for Yemeni unity. We had hoped that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Gulf states, and other Arab states would have attended the signing of this document. We know that all these states are concerned about Yemen's unity. Regardless of attempts by some people to cast doubt on our relations with fraternal and dear states, we will remain loyal to these states and retain for them amity, respect, appreciation, and gratitude.

[Al-Jundi] How do you envisage future events in Yemen?

[Basindwah] I believe our Yemeni people will rally around those who are eager for Yemen's unity. They will stand against all those who try to dismember Yemen. Those who are defending Yemen's unity and the march of democracy will triumph. I am confident of this because it is a historic inevitability.

Al-Iryani Comments on Accord Signing, Other Issues

NC2302085794 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 15 Feb 94 p 6

[Report on an interview with 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, minister of planning and development, by Kamal Jaballah in Sanaa; date not given]

[Excerpts] Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, minister of planning and development, has expressed his hope that all state officials will return to perform their duties in the capital, Sanaa, soon after the pledge and accord document is signed. The signing of this document is expected to take place in the Jordanian capital of Amman on 20 February.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM held at his residence in Sanaa, Dr. al-Iryani said that the signing of the pledge and accord document must be accompanied by the ending of the crushing political and economic crisis the unity state has been experiencing since 19 August 1993 on security, military, administrative, and institutional levels. [passage omitted]

The prominent Yemeni figure in the General People's Congress Party said that all accusations and claims of conspiracy against the cadres and leaderships of the Yemeni Socialist Party are political claims without any material evidence to back them up. The state is not responsible for them. Also, there are no conspiracies to assassinate Yemeni Socialist Party Leader 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, or the defense minister.

He added that the liquidations in the Socialist Party are remnants from the past, which have been reflected in the history of the party.

Dr. al-Iryani warned that the problem of internal terrorism in his country is not linked to the state. There are no Yemeni political forces practicing terrorism and political action at the same time because they are all seeking to gather popular support for themselves. Those who claim otherwise must provide the evidence for their allegations.

Regarding reports that some Yemeni sides supported terrorism abroad, Dr. al-Iryani said that the truth in this matter has been presented to President Husni Mubarak. Yemen is still waiting for Egyptian security units to visit and see for themselves the truth of this claim and other reports that there are three terrorist camps in the northern governorates and five in the southern governorates.

The Yemeni official denied reports about external support to kindle the current crisis in his country. He said: "This is not true and there is not one single shred of material evidence about external support for secession, apart from confirmations by a foreign diplomatic source residing in Sanaa. These confirmations said that contributions gathered in Saudi Arabia to help alleviate the catastrophe of the floods before unity in 1990, which hit mostly the southern governorates, were seized by the Socialist Party leadership in Aden at the end of 1993. The amount is somewhere in the region of $37 to $39 million. [passage omitted]

Ramadan: Country Willing To Normalize Ties With U.S.

JN2302090894 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 23 Feb 94 p 25

[Text] Baghdad—PETRA—Taha Yasin Ramadan, Iraqi vice president and member of the Revolution Command Council, has said that the next few months will be decisive because there are no more large obstacles or basic difficulties facing the implementation of Paragraph 22 of UN Security Council Resolution 687, which deals with lifting the embargo on Iraq acccording to a specified timetable. He said his country is waiting to see what the UN Security Council and other international quarters concerned with peace, security, and rights, will do, especially since dialogue and talks between Iraq and the United Nations are proceeding in a good and objective manner.

In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY in Baghdad, Ramadan denied the accusation leveled at his country every now and then that it is obstructing the work of international inspection teams. He said: What we want to see first is an evaluation of things within the framework of UN Security Council Resolution 687 despite its unfairness as it was imposed in the time of tyranny and hegemony. He noted that Iraq accepted Resolution 715 which was not mentioned previously, adding that this resolution calls for installing long-term monitoring cameras. He said: We believed that this was the only thing that would obstruct the talks and settlement of differences with the United Nations. He stressed that the maneuvers and accusations against Iraq, which usually precede reviewing the decision to lift the blockade, are false accusations.

Ramadan said that the imposition of the blockade was not just a punishment for an act of encroachment; namely, entering Kuwait, but is aimed against Iraq, its entity, accomplishments, potentials, and resources. He added that the sanctions imposed on Iraq—which encroached on every inch of its land and which deprived its people of food, water, medicine, and all basic needs—also aim at creating confusion and chaos in addition to fabricating lies one time after another. The objective, he added, is to implement their schemes and fabricate accusations that Iraq dropped chemical weapons on the shiites in the marshlands, southern Iraq. Iraq has called on the inspection teams and the states of the world to visit the area and verify our statements.

Asked about a scheduled visit by Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz to the United Nations during the next few days and the issues to be focused on during his talks, Ramadan said that the essential point in Iraq's program is to reach a formula to fully lift the economic embargo on Iraq, whether all at once or gradually. He said: Our stand vis-a-vis this matter is firm. We do not accept partial things, because the economic embargo is not on oil only. We categorically reject the formula which they are trying to impose on us. He said: They want us to sell limited quantities of oil. We consider this a blatant interference in our national sovereignty and with our potentials. This is one of the most controversial points. Furthermore, we firmly believe that this unjust formula which they are trying to impose on us will become a curtain for them to hide behind while continuing to impose the embargo. Although we do not deny the importance of oil as one of the major pillars of our country's economy, the other economic potentials, which existed in the past and which will appear in the future, are not less important. In addition to the natural resources which exist in Iraq, we became capable of production in the industrial, agricultural, mineral, and human fields.

Ramadan denied the rumors that Iraq possesses a number of long-range nuclear missiles installed by the United States in Kuwait to strike at the Soviet Union before it was divided. He said that these baseless rumors aim at showing that Iraq still possesses such weapons, and consequently, it should be pursued and pressure on it should continue.

He stressed that a number of countries such as Spain, Greece, Switzerland, Britain, and Australia have released part of the Iraqi assets to finance the purchase of food and medicine supplies. He expressed his regret, however, that some Arab countries have not yet released the Iraqi assets they hold.

He announced that his country is willing to forget the past, to deal with and normalize relations with any party, even with the United States, based on its principles and convictions and according to new calculations that take everything that has happened into consideration.

Iranian Pilots Land in Kurdistan Seeking Asylum

PM2302103994 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Feb 94 pp1, 4

[Text] London—A high-ranking Kurdish official told AL-HAYAH yesterday that an Iranian military helicopter landed in the village of Malumah in the area of Mawat in Iraqi Kurdistan the day before yesterday and that one of its two pilots applied to the Kurdish Government for political asylum.

The official, who is Hushyar Zibari, representative of the Kurdish Administration in Britain, said the authorities in al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate have begun interrogation of the two pilots—Habib Ruhaymi, a Kurd who requested political asylum, and Iraj Kalanaljin, an Iranian who expressed a desire to return to Iran. There has been no Iranian comment on this matter.

This is the first time the Kurdish Administration has been faced with such incident since the parliamentary elections held in May 1992 resulting in the formation of a government in Iraqi Kurdistan.

It should be noted that relations between that administration and Iran deteriorated seriously last month as a result of the Iranian forces' artillery shelling and penetration of Kurdish areas on the pretext of hunting Kurds opposed to the Tehran regime and using Iraqi Kurdistan as a base.

It is known that the region's administration provides shelter for the Iranian Kurdish opposition parties and allows them political activity in the areas under its control.

It has firmly rejected Iranian requests for the extradition of these oppositionists or their expulsion from the region, but it did ask these parties to move their offices to areas away from the borders with Iran to prevent them being used as an excuse for continuation of the shelling and penetration operations which have already claimed some Kurdish civilian victims.

'Udayy 'Temporarily' Running Industry Ministry

PM2202151594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Feb 94 p 2

[Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—'Udayy Saddam Husayn assumed the task of running the affairs of the Iraqi Industry Ministry 10 days ago, namely when Minister Husayn Kamil al-Majid's condition began to deteriorate and as a result he was moved to Amman to undergo surgery to remove a brain tumor.

Sources said that the Iraqi president has authorized his eldest son to temporarily assume the task of running the establishments which used to be run by al-Majid, Saddam's son-in-law.

Saddam Decorates Ba'th Party, RCC Members

JN2202202694 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, has decorated 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC], Arab Socialist Ba'th Party National Command members, RCC members, and members of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party with the medal of high merit for their distinguished role in the Mother of Battles.

Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God support him, congratulated the honorees and beseeched Almighty God to protect them, along with all our people, and lead their steps on the road of firm principles to serve our beloved homeland.

Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, chief of the Presidential Office, attended the awarding ceremony. Following are the texts of the presidential decrees:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Presidential Decree:

In view of RCC Vice Chairman 'Izzat Ibrahim Khalil's stand during the Mother of Battles, and based on the provisions of RCC Decree No. 407, dated 17 November 1991, we decree the following:

RCC Vice Chairman 'Izzat Ibrahim Khalil shall be awarded the medal of high merit.

The competent ministers shall implement this decree.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Presidential Decree:

In view of the stand adopted by the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party National Command members, whose names are listed below, during the Mother of Battles, and based on the provisions of RCC Decree No. 407, dated 17 November 1991, we decree the following:

The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party National Command members, whose names are listed below, shall be awarded the medal of high merit:

'Abd-al-Majid al-Tayyib al-Rafi'i

Badr-al-Din Muddaththir Sulayman

Ilyas Nakhlah Farah

The competent ministers shall implement this decree.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Presidential Decree:

In view of the stand adopted by the RCC members, whose names are listed below, during the Mother of Battles, and based on the provisions of RCC Decree No. 407, dated 17 November 1991, we decree the following:

The RCC members, whose names are listed below, shall be awarded the medal of high merit:

Taha Yasin Ramadan
Tariq 'Aziz
Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf
'Ali Hasan al-Majid
Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi
Mizban Khadr Hadi

The competent ministers shall implement this decree.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Presidential Decree:

In view of the stand adopted by members of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, whose names are listed below, during the Mother of Battles, and based on the provisions of RCC Decree No. 407, dated 17 November 1991, we decree the following:

Members of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, whose names are listed below, shall be awarded the medal of high merit:

Kamil Yasin Rashid
Sa'di Mahdi Salih
'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur
Muhammad Zimam 'Abd-al-Razzaq
Muhammad Yunus al-Ahmad
Khadr 'Abd-al-'Aziz Husayn
'Abd-al-Rahman Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman
Mizhir Matni 'Awwad
Radi Hasan Salman
'Aziz Salih al-Nu'man

The competent ministers shall implement this decree.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic

Republican Guards Killed by Black Market Dealers

JN2202175694 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 23 Feb 94 p 1

[Text] Baghdad—Security reports leaked to AL-BILAD from Baghdad have indicated that bloody clashes took place between black market foreign currency dealers and the Republican Guards in al-Shurjah and the Baghdad International Fair area last week.

These clashes resulted in the death of four Republican Guards personnel in the Baghdad International Fair area.

These clashes came on the heels of sweeping arrests and the confiscation of some $2 million from the ranks of foreign currency dealers.

AL-BILAD has also learned that foot patrols have been deployed in areas suspected of being used for foreign currency dealings. Stringent instructions have been issued to the Iraqi customs officials along the borders in the Tirbil area, asking them to institute several measures, including body searches of departing travelers. They were ordered to search for and confiscate any kind of currencies, and to refer to court anyone found in possession of undeclared currencies. The Iraqi customs officials were also instructed to search incoming and outgoing vehicles and confiscate anything that looks to be excess luggage, even if it is cigarettes, personal effects, and leather jackets, in particular.

The Iraqi border officials were also instructed to enforce certain measures regarding Arab travelers leaving Iraq. Foremost among these measures is that Arab residents who want to leave Iraq must obtain departure permits from the Arab Citizens Affairs Department, regardless of the time they have spent in Iraq, even if it is only 24 hours. This supersedes an earlier regulation which stipulated that only those who stayed in Iraq for one month or longer were required to obtain departure permits.

Also, all Iraqi hotels of the first, second, and third classes have been ordered to obtain boarding charges from Arabs in dollars. This regulation applied only to first and second class hotels in the past.

Government Sabotage Plans Reported in Kurdistan

LD2202205094 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1858 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, 22 Feb—The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] today said that 200 handpicked members of the special security services had completed a training course in al-Ramadi province, western Iraq, to carry out terrorist and sabotage operations in Iraqi Kurdistan and some neighboring countries under the direct supervision of Qusay, the youngest son of the ruler of Baghdad who is responsible for the special security organization.

Citing informed sources in Iraq, the assembly's statement said that the sabotage teams received extensive lessons during the course under the supervision of experts experienced in assassination, explosives, terrorism, spreading rumors, and sowing the seeds of sedition.

The statement said that those who were trained had been divided into four groups according to the tasks allotted to each group. The first group had been given the task of assassinating foreigners working for the UN agencies and organizations that are active in many parts of Iraq, particularly in the Iraqi Kurdistan region. The second group would carry out operations against prominent figures of the Iraqi opposition. The statement added that the third group had been given responsibility for sabotage operations and planting mines in important and densely populated areas in Iraqi Kurdistan, Iran, and Syria, where the Iraqi opposition is active. The statement pointed out that the fourth group would spread rumors and leak fabricated information through various media channels to mislead public opinion and create a state of frustration among the sons of the Iraqi people in and out of Iraq.

In another development, the assembly's statement said that the pathology department in Baghdad was receiving between 20 and 25 bodies daily brought in by officers of the special security organization, which is under the control of Qusay Saddam Husayn.

The assembly said that, according to reliable information received from Iraq, the bodies of people who had been executed were transported in ambulances with a confidential note from the special security organization ordering the pathologist to issue death certificates, stipulating that death had occurred as a result of a long illness, the nonavailability of treatment, or a heart attack. The statement added that the special security organization's note stressed that when the bodies of those executed were handed over to their families, they should be told not to open the coffins and to keep the funeral and burial rituals to the minimum.

Brotherhood Statement on Syria, Other Issues

JN2202120494 Baghdad Voice of Arab Syria in Arabic 0840 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Statement issued by the Shura Council of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria dated "January 1994;"—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Praise be to God the Almighty, and prayers and peace be upon the noblest prophet and his family, companions, and those who righteously follow him, until the day of judgment.

The Shura [Consultative] Council of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria held its third ordinary session amid serious domestic, regional, and international circumstances. The

Council discussed urgent Brotherhood issues and important internal affairs. It adopted the appropriate measures, and made decisions and recommendations on each of these affairs.

The Council also studied the longstanding and recent crises in the Syrian arena in particular and in the Arab and Islamic arenas in general. The Council began with the issue of Syria, which has become private real estate for members of the al-Asad family, so they can do whatever they please, loot the food of Syria's sons, and demoralize its generations in a way that will help weaken the nation, so that they will maintain control of its destiny. Moreover, the al-Asad family members are selling to the enemies the Syrian territory which they deem necessary to sell in order to entrench their thrones in the remaining territories.

Generally, human sentiments become more sympathetic in the event of death. However, these sentiments take another form when death becomes a cheap merchandise, which politicians trade in, so they can obtain popular gains and consecrate the theft of public property; namely, the ruling of the country. This was watched by the sons of Syria and the entire world on the Syrian television screens. Kings, emperors, ingenious men, and historic leaders have died, but was life paralyzed in any world country due to the death of one man in the same way it was paralyzed in Syria for more than a week?

Does this not simply mean that a single son of Hafiz al-Asad is actually more important than all Syria and the areas of life that were obstructed throughout Syria—agriculture, industry, commerce, science, education, and politics? Does the fabrication of marches and the massing of tens of thousands of people from Syria, Lebanon, and other countries not mean that the al-Asad regime is totally bankrupt and that it needs booster doses to restore some of its shaken prestige?

Death is no reason to rejoice over others' grief, because it is the destiny of everyone. However, given that his son has died, the tyrant [Hafiz al-Asad], will taste the bitterness of losing a dear one, something al-Asad has caused for thousands of fathers and mothers. Knowing that Hafiz al-Asad had prepared his deceased son to succeed him in ruling and running the al-Asad ranch, Syria, the way he pleases, should al-Asad continue to repeat worn-out words such as the people, democracy, and freedom?

If people are asked to believe such words, can the Syrian people in particular be asked to do so, knowing that this people is denied the freedom of expression, and that the Syrians were forced into voicing something contrary to what they feel and believe? What is important for al-Asad is to reiterate such words as the people, freedom, and democracy, so some European and U.S. politicians as well as the masters of the new world order will hear them and pretend to believe them in the presence of some intellectuals who care for human rights. Based on these words, these masters would pay funds and extend aid to the al-Asad regime and help him entrench his throne which is built on human skulls. They would also enhance his distinguished role in finalizing the suspect deal [reference to the Middle East peace process].

Palestine is part of the Middle East and the entire Islamic world and its cause was planned to be very complicated. Therefore, it is not strange to see that the settlement of this cause is taking place in many phases and through many deals. Part of the price is paid before the settlement takes place, another part is paid during the settlement, and other parts are paid at the end of the settlement. How will Hafiz al-Asad pay the price? Will he pay it from the accounts of Syria, Palestine, or Lebanon? In exchange, the throne will be kept and bank accounts will increase.

The Clinton-al-Asad meeting is clear evidence of this; and the assistance of Europe, which has ignored human rights, is further strong evidence. Hafiz al-Asad's practices over the past 25 years in Syria, Lebanon, and in the Palestinian arena are a fact which expresses all this. So, what now? The sons of the Syrian people know how to remove their shackles and to break the gates of their big jail now that they have become aware of the dangers of the game and its terrible dimensions.

If Hafiz al-Asad wants the Syrian people to believe his calls for freedom and democracy he is required to convince the people—through some practical moves—of the soundness of his claims. The prisons are still full of victims who have a right to freedom; the thousands of displaced people also have rights in their homeland; the thousands of starving people have the right to an honorable life; and the freedom of thinking must see the light. The people will not believe any call by the regime before the return of their usurped rights.

O sons of our lofty people in beloved Syria; O sons of the Arabs and Muslims: The philosophy of the new world order has become known to all and its basic features are seen by every wise man. The new world order simply aims at crushing Islam and its people in the Islamic world, in fact, in the entire world. The new world order wants America—at the instructions of world Zionism—to unilaterally make the decisions of the entire Islamic world. The new world order wants the Muslims to kill each other and to destroy each other—Islamists against nationalists, extremists against moderates, and rulers against people. Each of those is required to crush the other party or remove it from the arena so that this injured Islamic world remains fumbling in the whirlpool of violence, blood, fire, ignorance, and destruction. They want the Islamic world to remain fragmented; they want the fighters to continue to beg for weapons; and they want the starving people to continue to beg for morsels of bread so that the masters of civilization and human rights will bestow morsels of bread on them. Proof is everywhere—to the East of the Islamic world and its West, Asia and Africa.

We do not need to mention the ongoing massacres in Somalia and Afghanistan as well as the small and big whirlpools between them. All our nation must be fully aware of the surrounding dangers, otherwise, nobody will survive the shipwreck.

When will those fighting each other understand this? When will they understand that the besieged children of Iraq are the children of the nation? When will they understand that the unity of Iraq—land, people, and entity—is part of this nation's unity and an important pillar of its existence which is threatened now and in the future? When will they understand that the people of Sudan, who are besieged and threatened because they adhere to their doctrine, territorial integrity, and independent decisionmaking, are also a big asset for the dignity of the entire nation?

The other tragedy is that of our Muslim brothers in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the tragedy of our steadfast militant people in occupied Palestine. Defenseless people are fighting with stones against armies equipped with the most sophisticated lethal weapons, against the plots of the international community, and against biased, silent, and maneuvering parties. It is not strange to see that the jihad of the fedayeen of the Hamas organization and the militants of Bosnia-Herzegovina are achieving the victory of defenseless justice over armed falsehood even if the price is very high.

In order to stop the bloodshed of our people at the hands of enemies and their agents; and in order to save the nation from the [Indian] Ocean to the [Atlantic] Ocean, the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria calls on all parties to hold genuine national dialogue—and we underscore the word genuine—to place the higher interests above all interests in Algeria, Tunisia, and in Egypt as well as in every country and in every part of our nation. The Muslim Brotherhood in Syria calls for a constructive and meaningful dialogue that turns the conflict among brothers within the same country, the one people, and the one nation into a battle against the external enemies who do not differentiate between a ruler and the people.

We have great hope that awareness will return to this nation and its warring parties. The evidence of this is the success of a number of democratic experiments in many Arab countries, such as Jordan and Yemen. Further evidence is the increasing number of voices calling for political pluralism, public liberties, and human rights in every Arab and Islamic part. We should here recall the effects of the Gulf crisis on the economic situation in Jordan and the unjust blockade of the al-'Aqabah Port because of its concern for the unity of the Arab ranks.

What strengthens the hope is the growing spirit of solidarity among the sons of the nation and the close viewpoints among its intellectual and political currents. The support, which our oppressed group received over the past 14 years, is another sign of the general awakening and the continuation of the values of wellbeing and justice.

On this occasion, the Shura Council expresses its thanks and gratitude to all the states, parties, organizations, and individuals who gave support and provided shelter.

Let us raise our voices and call for putting an end to the wars of the brothers and shutting the mouths of those who beautify injustice in front of unjust people and degrade science in front of rulers. Let us unite minds and arms to champion human rights everywhere. Let us strengthen Islamic awakening to lead the nation to dignity, unity, and full liberation. Let us work together to build a new world whose slogan is dialogue, not injustice, plotting, or domination.

O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other not that ye may despise each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is he who is the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things. [Koranic verse]

[Dated] Sha'ban 1414 Hegira, corresponding to January 1994

[Signed] The Shura Council of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria

Rabin on Progress of Palestinian-Israeli Talks

NC2202160394 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 19 Feb 94 p 5

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Amirah Hasan; place and date not given]

[Text] [Hasan] What role did Egypt, President Husni Mubarak, and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa play to bring about the success of the agreement in Cairo?

[Rabin] President Mubarak and 'Amr Musa had an important and special role in bringing about the success of the Cairo agreement. They did not deny us the time or the effort. They were partners in the talks and presented proposals for the settlement. We accepted and adopted some of them. President Mubarak, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, the president's aides, and Egypt had an important role. I like to personally thank them and also to convey the Israeli Government's thanks.

[Hasan] What issues have remained outside of the Cairo agreement?

[Rabin] First, we reached agreement on many points in Cairo. I believe that this agreement represents a big step forward, especially with regard to the implementation of the first stage of the "Declaration of Principles" agreement, I mean the "Gaza-Jericho" agreement. We agreed in Cairo on all disputed issues, such as responsibility for external security, the crossing points, management of the crossing points, and the size and division of areas in the Gaza Strip.

As to Jericho, there is a map of the region. But 'Arafat has the right to raise the issue of Jericho's size in the meeting that will take place between me and him when we sum up all the contents of the agreement.

On the other hand, other issues remain pending, such as the problem of security for the Israelis and Palestinians on the major roads in Gaza. There are also other issues mentioned in the Declaration of Principles, such as joint projects and the Palestinians' own projects near the Dead Sea in an area that we will agree on.

As to religious issues, the Christian holy places in Jericho will be under Palestinian authority. Jewish ones will remain under Israeli authority. For the record, the Cairo agreement did not discuss at all the establishment of the Palestinian police, its size, or its mode of operation in Gaza together with the Israeli police. For example, if an agreement is concluded, there will be joint action between us and the Palestinian police even on the major roads that will be built for the Israeli settlements from Gush Qativ to Lintserim in the Gaza Strip. There are also talks about the establishment of the first centers for coordination between the Palestinian forces and the Israeli forces, which will take care of security matters, the formation of the Palestinian police and its size, and setting up observation posts for ships and fishing. We are not against the Palestinians having a number of ships for guard duty in the sea. All the above issues have not been discussed yet and no agreement has been reached on them so far.

As to civilian affairs, Gadi Zohar on the Israeli side and Jamil al-Tarifi on the Palestinian side met in Taba to discuss issues related to the transfer of authority from the Israeli civil administration. This will start with electricity, particularly as electricity in the Gaza Strip comes from Israel. Water and communications issues were also discussed.

[Hasan] Are you interested in having economic relations with the Palestinians?

[Rabin] My interest is focused on setting up a free economic body between the two sides. Naturally, we must take into consideration some of their reservations and some of our reservations as well. However, this body must be one economic entity before the world.

The Palestinian side wants its economic relations to be linked more to the Arab countries. On our part, we have our own views, such as supervising the Palestinian work in Israel. There are issues that have not yet been agreed on, such as that of currency. This is one of the demands submitted by the countries that will be giving aid. It is not our demand.

In the past, the Arab countries gave financial aid to the PLO. But today, the countries that will finance projects in the area need to know about those projects. They also need to know the various channels of the projects and to make sure that the funds reach their targets.

The Palestinian authority must define the means through which the funds should arrive, such as the development bank. For example, we get U.S. aid and we must present all receipts showing how the funds were used because these countries need to know for which projects the funds have been used. Israel will not interfere in such matters between the Palestinians and the countries contributing to the projects in the area.

[Hasan] Have the government of Israel and you personally delineated the area of Jericho?

[Rabin] We signed a map today. With my consent, Shim'on Peres sent a message to 'Arafat in which he said that the issue of Jericho's area and 'Arafat's request to expand that area will be discussed after summarizing the agreement's provisions. Our stance is clear with regard to the map, but it is possible to discuss ways of enlarging Jericho's area.

However, we are not currently discussing this issue. It will be postponed until a meeting is held between myself and 'Arafat before signing the agreement's provisions. During the Cairo meeting, we agreed on many points, including the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord.

[Hasan] Increasing the area of Jericho would make it easy for many Palestinians in the occupied territories, who view the Cairo agreement as Palestinian concessions to Israeli

security demands, such as the Palestinian People's Party, which first supported the Declaration of Principles but later joined the opposition.

[Rabin] Even in Israel there is dissatisfaction over the Cairo agreement. This is natural. There will always be people who oppose any agreement containing a settlement. There was indeed a settlement. When I present this settlement to the [Knesset's] Foreign Affairs Committee, it will be criticized by some members.

[Hasan] Will the Israeli Army withdraw by April, or is even that date not sacred to you?

[Rabin] I do not want to procrastinate in the talks for one day, but at the same time I do not want an agreement that ends in failure. We have to remember that concluding an agreement with an Arab state will always raise an argument about the nature of peace. And after agreeing on this point, we will have to work out an agreement about the borders because there can be no agreement without border demarcation. Then come the security arrangements and the normalization of relations. After an agreement is concluded, it then becomes the responsibility of all parties concerned, Arab and Israeli, to preserve this agreement, as was the case with Egypt.

But with regard to the agreement with the Palestinians, which involves stages—the transitional period, the first stage of the Declaration of Principles, and then the overall agreement—things are more complicated. This is because we are trying to achieve peaceful coexistence between two entities: a Palestinian entity and the Israeli entity in the territories. We must remember that the Israelis are spread all over the territories and lead a daily life alongside the Palestinians. There are tens of thousands of Palestinian and Israeli cars that face each others everyday. If we do not create a clear-cut understanding from the beginning, it will be difficult to control this situation, which could doom the agreement from the start. But if we want to prove that it is possible for us to live side by side in peace under this agreement, despite all the difficulties and opposition from the Palestinian and Israeli sides, we must reach a clear-cut and accurate definition of all details. Otherwise, the situation may explode at any time over any small problem. For instance, if there is a road accident involving a Palestinian car and an Israeli car, how should we handle the matter and in which court? We have to find solutions for all such small problems right from the start, or else we will regret it and the agreement will fail. I emphasize my desire to make the agreement work. It is better to delay its implementation for one month until the positions for us and for the Palestinians are clear and agreed on, particularly regarding the matters that may cause things to explode. The real discussion is not between myself and 'Arafat, and not even among the senior officials, but between the Palestinian and Israeli citizens in their daily lives.

[Hasan] Are you confident that Yasir 'Arafat will be able to control things in the occupied territories?

[Rabin] We basically presume that the Palestinians will have to do their jobs and play their role. We also believe that 'Arafat can control things. I will not appear to be helping him in these things. We expect 'Arafat to live up to this responsibility with the help of the Palestinian police. There also will be some joint cooperation between us on some issues. 'Arafat is a full partner and he must play his role as we play ours. With our cooperation, we will be successful.

[Hasan] How do you want the Palestinian police to be structured?

[Rabin] This issue is still under discussion in the Taba negotiations. I have just received the first working paper. But I want calm negotiations between the two sides without the media. Making statements to the media and being criticized will impede the negotiations. Therefore, I will not go into details with you about the size and number of the Palestinian police. But I can say that the atmosphere that prevailed during the negotiations was positive. The negotiators discussed all aspects of the Palestinian police establishment with regard to its size, number, authority, the stages of its deployment, and the buildings that will be handed over so that it can organize itself and assume its responsibilities.

[Hasan] What kind of cooperation will there be between you and the Palestinian police?

[Rabin] First, each side will do its duty. For example, there are a quarter of a million Palestinians in Gaza city who have to respect law and order in the interest of the Palestinians and prevent terrorist actions. On our part, we will prevent the Israelis from taking any illegal actions. We will give the Palestinian police all the areas where there are Palestinians and all the refugee camps.

Regarding responsibility for international borders between Egypt and the Gaza Strip in the Rafah area, we have delineated these borders in such a way as to have the minimum level of Palestinian population centers. The Palestinians there will be in charge.

[Hasan] Are all the Israeli security demands included in the Cairo agreement?

[Rabin] The most important thing is that we reached an agreement. We want to make progress in implementing the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

[Hasan] The situation in the occupied territories is deteriorating. There are daily killings and repression at the hands of the army and the reaction of those opposed to the agreement increases when Israelis are killed. Why, then, the delay in implementing the agreement?

[Rabin] Let us first clarify who is carrying out these operations. They are the Palestinians opposed to the agreement, such as Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], Islamic Jihad, some of the opposition Palestinian elements, and some of the Fatah Hawks who refuse to obey the orders coming from Tunis. They will continue their operations because they are opposed to the agreement. Therefore, we should take care to make the agreement clearer. If we do not clarify matters further, the operations

will continue without control and the situation will blow up one day. Don't believe that Israel is not subjected to danger; it is subjected to danger just like the PLO until calm prevails. I am not asking the PLO to shoulder the responsibility for actions carried out by the opposition elements in the area. But when the PLO assumes responsibility in an organized way, then I will ask it to shoulder full responsibility as it says in the agreement.

[Hasan] Regarding Fatah's Hawks, the reason they joined Hamas and Islamic Jihad is the army's repression against them, especially after some of them had surrendered their weapons to the army. But the army continued to chase and even assassinate them.

[Rabin] I don't want to go into the details. They, too, are being pursued more by Palestinians than by Israelis. This is an internal struggle. I believe that the current stage will see several struggles in the area. Israel remains responsible for dealing with this situation until the Palestinian police officers are deployed. Then it will become responsible for maintaining law and stability in Gaza.

[Hasan] Will the army continue to pursue the wanted Palestinians?

[Rabin] There are some wanted people who stopped their activity after 13 September 1993. Scores of them have returned to their homes. Unfortunately, Abu-Rish, a wanted Palestinian, was killed by mistake but the rest are unharmed. I am sorry for what happened to Abu-Rish. Those who continued the acts of violence after 13 September will be treated in the same way as those who oppose the agreement and who practice terrorism.

[Hasan] Are you and your government concerned about opening the door to dialogue with Hamas and if so on what conditions?

[Rabin] I am prepared to hold a dialogue with any party that is ready to join and back the agreement on the Declaration of Principles and that abstains from undertaking terrorist operations.

[Hasan] Are you trying put out feelers to Hamas?

[Rabin] There are no attempts to put out feelers, because Hamas' positions are known and categorical. Not even the PLO has succeeded in holding talks with Hamas.

[Hasan] Could the release of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin help turn over a new leaf with Hamas and make things easier for the PLO?

[Rabin] I don't think so. But if Shaykh Ahmad Yasin changes his positions, supports the agreement, and calls for a halt to terrorism, the issue could be discussed. Shaykh Yasin's position is the opposite of this.

[Hasan] Will all the Palestinian detainees be released, especially now that we are in the month of Ramadan and since this issue is of interest to every Palestinian?

[Rabin] I repeat: The release of all or some of the detainees is part of the negotiations to implement the agreement on the Declaration of Principles. Some of them have committed murder. I do not want to get into details now.

[Hasan] Do you link their release with progress in the talks?

[Rabin] Yes of course.

[Hasan] Your position has changed in this regard. Why?

[Rabin] It has always been my personal position to link the release of detainees with progress in the talks and with another demand we want the Palestinians to meet, that is, providing information on the Israeli soldiers who went missing in the Sultan Ya'qub battles of July 1982.

[Hasan] Are you first awaiting an answer regarding the Israeli soldiers?

[Rabin] The release of detainees depends on the issue of the missing soldiers. What we are being asked to do is to release detainees who were locked up 10 years ago. If we are discussing events of 10 years ago, then it's mutual.

[Hasan] How many Palestinian detainees are in Israeli jails?

[Rabin] Approximately 9,000. Every month, some of them are released while some others are detained.

[Hasan] Will their release make 'Arafat's job and that of the supporters of the peace process in the territories easier?

[Rabin] It might make things easier but at the same time it would step up the terrorism undertaken today by Palestinians. I do not encourage terrorism. I will release no one who has been involved in terrorism because he will go back and do it again. Some Hamas people who returned from the Marj al-Zuhur area [in south Lebanon] have been detained again.

[Hasan] The deportation and then repatriation of 415 Hamas members enhanced their position. Were you wrong to deport them and has the age of deportation ended?

[Rabin] I think Hamas was on a path toward enhancing its position over the past two years. Today they carry the opposition banner, even though they are not the only ones opposed to the agreement. The deportation constituted a blow that weakened them. But there will always be new cells. If we fail to reach an agreement and the PLO and the Palestinian police do not get to the territories, things won't be clear. I believe in our partner's ability to preserve law and order in the areas that will fall under its control.

[Hasan] Will you repeat the closure of the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly Gaza?

[Rabin] I support enforcing the closure despite the presence of 50,000 Palestinian workers, 20,000 from Gaza, who work in Israel. This number does not include businessmen and doctors. I believe the economy will deteriorate if Gaza is closed. But if operations persist inside Israel, I will reconsider the issue. I do not want to have to close

the Gaza Strip. But if terrorism directed at Israelis continues, I regret to say that my primary responsibility is to protect Israel's security.

[Hasan] Why do you link the issue of the Palestinian agents with the release of Palestinian detainees and prisoners?

[Rabin] Of course I link the two things because those who cooperated with us are entitled to the same privileges that will be granted to those who tried to harm Israel.

[Hasan] It is the custom to try those people who cooperate with the occupation against their own people. Why should the fate of an agent be linked with that of a struggler who fought the occupation?

[Rabin] People who conducted terrorist operations were tried everywhere.

[Hasan] Are you talking about agents who betrayed their people and cooperated with the occupier?

[Rabin] They did not betray their people. An agent is a person who opposes terrorism.

[Hasan] Is Israel willing to absorb these agents?

[Rabin] We are willing to take whoever wishes it.

[Hasan] You recognized the existence of a Palestinian entity, a Palestinian flag, and a Palestinian anthem. Why then do you object to the establishment of a state?

[Rabin] The others are no symbol of sovereignty. There are many such entities around the world but none of them is a state. There are far more Kurds than Palestinians. Are Iraq and Turkey willing to recognize them as a state? Our target today is to implement what we agreed upon at the Madrid peace conference during the first transitional period. A timetable took shape in the Declaration of Principles prepared in Oslo and signed in Washington. This timetable applies to a period no later than two years from the implementation of the comprehensive agreement—Gaza-Jericho First. Then we will begin negotiations on the final solution.

[Hasan] Can the duration of the self-rule and the transitional period be shortened if peace and order prevail in the region? And will you abstain from objecting to the establishment of a Palestinian state in that case?

[Rabin] Right now I adhere to the Labor Party positions, which oppose the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

We maintain this stance. But we did not object to the integration of the Palestinian entity with Jordan.

[Hasan] Do you support a Palestinian-Israeli confederation?

[Rabin] I support all proposals for Israeli-Palestinian cooperation. When we reach an agreement and succeed, many possibilities not proposed today will be available.

[Hasan] The main issues for negotiation, such as the [1948] refugees, Jerusalem, the settlements, the 1967 refugees, and water, have not yet been practically discussed. How will these problems be solved?

[Rabin] Why should I discuss special scenarios when we already have one that is agreed upon? I am against the Palestinians' right to repatriation. I want to tell you that you are posing questions that I prefer are not posed. My position is clear: Why should we discuss subjects we agreed with the PLO not to discuss now? We are not trying today to solve problems that have existed for 100 years. Let us begin with the transitional period, which has never before been offered to the Palestinians. Israel gave the Palestinians this solution, which is only interim, not final. We are not against the Palestinians proposing the shape of the final solution but we tell them to begin with the first step, a chance they have never been offered before. Why, when between 1949 and 1967 the West Bank was under the control of Jordan and Gaza under Egypt, wasn't a Palestinian state established? The West Bank, Gaza, and east Jerusalem were under Arab rule. Did Israel prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state then? As for Jerusalem, it must remain united and under Israeli sovereignty.

[Hasan] Were you wrong to start building settlements in 1967?

[Rabin] There are settlements. We as a Labor Party opposed their establishment, while others supported it. This is a fact. The agreement with the PLO deals with the interim period, during which all the settlements will remain.

[Hasan] Why have you not met President al-Asad?

[Rabin] That's not up to me. President al-Asad opposes not only such a meeting, but also contacts between the foreign ministers. Syria prevents direct contacts between us. Syria is making a grave mistake. I do not expect President al-Asad to do what President al-Sadat did and visit Jerusalem but it is difficult to convince the Israeli people that Syria is interested in peace when, at the same time, it is not prepared for high-level meetings. Syria is making no confidence-building statements. For example, Knesset member 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah sought permission to travel to Syria along with a small delegation of Israeli Arabs to extend condolences to President al-Asad on his son's death but the request was turned down. This is not a confidence-building step. The Syrian Government and President al-Asad showed no readiness for peace.

[Hasan] Will you approve the return of poet Mahmud Darwish and 'Arafat's adviser 'Ammar Shattur to Israel?

[Rabin] I have received no official request in this regard; I know nothing about this. When I receive a request, I will discuss it.

[Hasan] Have Israel's relations with the Arab world improved since the Oslo agreement?

[Rabin] No doubt there is a new atmosphere and there are meetings. I believe that in the next few months the multilateral working groups will meet in Oman, Qatar, and Tunisia. Who would have thought before the signing of the

Declaration of Principles with the PLO on 13 September 1993 that we would go to those countries and meet representatives of Arab states that have no relations with Israel to discuss building a regional peace? I think this is an important change and there is a general change in the Arab world.

[Hasan] Will your government bring about a just and comprehensive peace with the Arab world?

[Rabin] This is our objective. Within the framework of the Madrid conference, we called for a comprehensive peace with Israel's neighbors in addition to Egypt and the Palestinians. I believe that if progress is achieved with Syria, which is changing its way and method for peace [as published], that will boost the peace with Arab countries that have no border with Israel, such as Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, and Lebanon [as published]. But it is hard to imagine that Libya and Iraq will accept such a step.

Peres on Cairo Talks, Christopher Shuttle Mission

TA2202122894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Excerpt] The Israeli and PLO delegations met in Cairo this morning for another discussion of the security issues. The talks focused on the size of the Palestinian police. Later today, the committee dealing with the transfer of the civilian powers will hold its session.

After meeting the foreign minister of Malta, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said this morning that the Israeli-PLO talks in Cairo are making satisfactory progress. He refused to say whether the issue of collaborators is being discussed. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports:

[Begin recording] [Segal] The next Arab League convention, which will be held in Cairo in March, will discuss an offer which will probably bring the Arab boycott against Israel near its end. According to the offer, each Arab country will be able to decide whether to end or continue the boycott on its own.

Political sources in Jerusalem believe that if such a resolution is made, it would be followed by the cancellation of the boycott by several important Arab countries such as, among others, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Tunisia, and Morocco.

At the same time next month, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will arrive on a Middle East shuttle mission seeking to attain a breakthrough on the Syrian track. Foreign Minister Peres this morning addressed himself to the issue of U.S. involvement in the political process:

[Peres] The U.S. involvement is not the same on all three tracks. The negotiations with the Palestinians today are, in the main part, held directly between the two sides. Negotiations with Jordan take place in Washington, and I would like to see a faster pace there. As for Syria, for all intents and purposes, the negotiations are at the very initial stages. We would like to see a breakthrough there. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Peres on Withdrawal Date, Paris Talks, Prisoners

TA2302074594 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Mikha Friedman—live]

[Text] [Friedman] Good morning, sir. We need your assistance in finding our way in the maze of contradicting pieces of information. We hear there was a serious setback in Paris, where the Palestinians reneged on several earlier understandings. At the same time, very good progress was reportedly made in Cairo, and Qol Yisra'el even announced that 5 May has been set as the date for the beginning of the withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho and that Yasir 'Arafat has been notified of it and has accepted the date. Where do things really stand?

[Peres] Look, first, Yasir 'Arafat has not been notified of any date; neither has a date been set. Therefore, although that report is full of goodwill, it is inaccurate. The real information is that progress was made in Taba. Important progress was made last week. Additional progress was made yesterday. If indeed this pace is kept up, there is a good chance that an agreement will be reached in the negotiations within a few weeks, and it could be implemented in a short time. We cannot yet provide a specific date because there are always surprises during negotiations.

[Friedman] You have recently said that there are no sacred dates but only sacred time frames, allowing us to understand that the four-month span between the day the agreement with the PLO is signed and the beginning of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal will be observed in any event. Do you still insist on those four months?

[Peres] I said four months after the agreement is signed. It has not been signed yet. At the same time, I believe that if it is signed—and I believe it will be in a few weeks—we will not need four months; we may require only four weeks or even less. That is, I do not know whether it will take place in April; it could take another month, if everything works well. Still, the time span was properly set.

As for the Paris talks, one must realize that negotiations include many surprises, tricks, changes of position, and setbacks. There is no need to get overly excited about this. We have experienced this in other negotiations. In general, however, I believe that the PLO today is more pragmatic and that, like us, it wants to end the negotiations as soon as possible. I do not underestimate the many details that have to be dealt with, but in general, very satisfactory progress has been made.

[Friedman] It seems, however, that the PLO is trying to get in Paris what it failed to attain in the Cairo and Davos

talks in which you participated: symbols of sovereignty, such as their own currency and customs, which is the source of the crisis in Paris.

[Peres] I believe this is a mistake. The time of nationalist economics is over. Economy today is based on free markets not national markings, because you cannot feed children flags for breakfast. This is a bit old-fashioned. Everyone is making efforts today to have economy influence politics and not the other way around. We do not want to cater to the leaders' egos but to the people's needs.

[Friedman] Finance Minister Shohat said, however, that if the Paris talks fail, we will opt for nationalist economies and separate the economies of the territories and Israel.

[Peres] Look, the Palestinians will suffer from this, not us. Things must be kept in proportion. Israel's national income is $70 billion; the national income in the territories is $2-3 billion. The territories need Israeli jobs and markets. For example, where will they export their farming produce? You know that 50,000 Palestinians working in Israel make a very large income. I know that there are two schools of thought in the PLO: the national and the economic. That is, some of the PLO officials still believe that nationalism is more important than the market, but many of them are university graduates who are familiar with the modern world. They are aware of what would benefit both the Palestinians and Israel.

I suggest that we do not present this issue as something Israel needs. The territories need a free economy, possibilities of finding work and selling goods, and a stable currency more than we do. Our economy is based on three or four agreements: the free trade agreement with the United States; associate membership in the EEC; and a free trade agreement with EFTA [European Free Trade Association]. Furthermore, we have bilateral agreements with the whole world. Israel exported $4.5-billion worth of high-tech, sophisticated electronic goods to the United States last year. We always present this as if someone is doing us a favor. We need no such favors, and no one is doing us any. We want the economic situation of the territories to be good.

[Friedman] Mr. Peres, I would like you to comment about today's top story on the front page of DAVAR, which says that Israel planned to free 1,000 Palestinian prisoners as a holiday gesture and to mark the progress in the Cairo talks, but changed its mind in the wake of the killing of Tzipora Sason and the unrest in the territories.

[Peres] There is no doubt that the killings significantly affect national morale. The report itself, I believe, is not accurate. We must wait and see about the date and scope of the prisoner release.

IDF Withdrawal Completion Slated for May

TA2302061894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] As the peace talks continue in several locations around the world, there is word here in Jerusalem that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho will be completed by the third week of May. Senior sources in Jerusalem gave this estimate to Qol Yisra'el correspondent Hayim Hecht. These sources say the May date has already been transmitted to Yasir 'Arafat.

On Jordan, the sources said, the talks in Washington are concentrating on preparing a full and detailed peace.

As far as the Palestinian police force is concerned, Israel is said to have agreed that it would be 8,500-strong, a compromise between the positions of both sides. According to the sources, once the agreement is actually signed, Israel will release more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners.

[A report by On Levi on page 1 of Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 23 February adds that "the IDF had planned to free about 1,000 Palestinian detainees on Sunday, 20 February, but canceled the move in the wake of the murder of Tzipora Sason near Ari'el on Friday night."]

Speaking earlier in Madrid, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that when an agreement on Palestinian self-rule is signed between Israel and the Palestinians, the IDF withdrawal can be implemented within a few weeks.

[Begin Rabin recording] Since I do not know when we will reach the agreement, I can't give you any speculation about dates. But allow me to say: We would like that the implementation of the agreement will be done in a matter of a few weeks and not to be prolonged too long. [end recording]

The prime minister made the comment at a joint news conference yesterday in Madrid with his Spanish counterpart, Felipe Gonzalez. Rabin, on the third day of his four-day visit, arrives today in Portugal.

The head of Fatah in the West Bank, Faysal al-Husayni, says agreement will be reached with Israel on implementing the Gaza-Jericho-First accord by the April 13th deadline. Al-Husayni made the statement after meeting with the foreign minister of Malta, Guido de Marco.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 23 February adds that "Israeli and Palestinian negotiators in Cairo reported that progress was made in yesterday's talks. Chief PLO delegate Nabil Sha'th said that it is possible that Prime Minister Rabin and PLO leader 'Arafat will be able to meet by the end of next week."]

Darawshah Comments on Goals of Syria Visit

PM2202154394 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Feb 94 p p 1, 4

[Excerpts] London, Damascus—'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah, Arab deputy in the Israeli Knesset and representative of the Arab Democratic Party, has stressed that a visit to Syria by a delegation headed by him is imminent. And that the aim is to condole Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad for the death of his son, Staff Major Basil al-Asad, who was tragically killed in an accident last month. He said that

"contacts are under way to set a date for the visit and the place from which we are going to cross to Syria."

Darawshah told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT over the telephone from his office in al-Nasirah that the visit is expected to take place within the next few days. And that he prefers to cross into Syrian territory via the Golan Heights so that there would be no need to use passports. He expressed his confidence that "Syria will offer all capabilities to make this visit a success." [passage omitted]

Syrian sources have not confirmed whether the delegation is going to discuss matters concerning the peace process. However, they said that it may propose some views vis-a-vis peace.

As for Darawshah, he stressed that the visit is limited to offering condolences to President al-Asad, his family, and the Syrian people for Basil's death." [no opening quotemarks as published] He added: "We are not entrusted with any official tasks or with conveying any messages." He went on: "Raising any political issues depends on the host, who is the one to decide the meeting's program and contents." [passage omitted]

On the makeup of the delegation, which will comprise 30 figures, Darawshah said that it will represent all Palestinian geographical, religious, literary, educational, political, and national sectors and groups in Israel." [no opening quotemarks as published] According to Darawshah, the delegation will include Knesset members 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah and Talab al-Sani'. [passage omitted]

Editorial Views 'Mute Dialogue' With Syria

TA2002150194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Feb 94 p B1

[Editorial: "A Mute Dialogue With Syria"]

[Text] The Palestinian organization of The Battalion of 13 Black September fired a katyusha at the Western Galilee on 16 February to demonstrate its opposition to the Oslo and Washington agreements. The prime minister described it as a "marginal" organization; the commander of the Northern Command said it was an "isolated" katyusha.

General Yitzhaq Mordekhay did not promise that such shooting will not be repeated, and the fact that it is marginal does not make the organization less threatening. The two reactions, however, indicated there is an Israeli desire to distinguish between Hizballah and other terror organizations. Rabin determined that the understandings between Israel and Syria which followed Operation Accountability remained intact even after this shooting: "Our understandings, which referred to Hizballah activity, are being observed." As for the Palestinian battalion, "the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will find ways of dealing with it."

The prime minister, therefore, rejected the opposition's demands and refused to charge the Syrians with responsibility for the katyusha which fell in Israeli territory. It could be detected from the prime minister's restrained reaction to the Hizballah ambush which left us with four fatalities that Rabin is making an effort not to disturb the atmosphere in which the bilateral talks are being held in Washington. In fact, he no longer holds Damascus responsible for terror acts in which Hizballah is not involved, and gives Syria credit for keeping the agreement which was made at the end of July 1993 with U.S. mediation.

It could be assumed that Hafiz al-Asad understands Rabin's intentions. His willingness to accept a delegation of condolences of Israeli Arabs—Muslims, Christians, and Druze—can be viewed as a gesture to Israel. The fact that the agreement came in the wake of U.S. and Egyptian encouragement does not diminish its importance: It can be viewed as answering a wish Rabin expressed some two weeks ago: that Syria take confidence building measures between the two countries. If the Prime Minister's Office did say that the Syrian approval of the delegation's visit could be considered "an important signal from the Syrian president," it could become apparent that a sort of mute dialogue is taking place between Rabin and al-Asad.

There may be some in Israel who will regard the affair of the delegation as a Syrian trick: al-Asad attempting to set up a pro- Syrian lobby in Israel. This idea should not be disregarded, but—even if we assume this suspicious attitude has grounds—did we not always say that the Israeli Arab citizens could serve as a "bridge" between the Jewish state, the neighboring Arab countries, and the entire Arab world?

There is no need to overdramatize the delegation's trip. Knesset Member Darawshah will not be authorized to hold negotiations with the Syrian president who on his part, through the media subordinate to him, will stress that the visit is only held to allow the visitors to perform the rite of extending condolences—nothing more. Nevertheless, it is significant that the Syrian president will receive the condolences of Israel's Arabs in a manner similar to that which Jordan's King Husayn has been maintaining for years.

The "ongoing" talks in Washington—and the Americans have not yet started talking about the 13th round of talks—are still stuck; the Syrian delegate keeps making peace conditional on Israel's full withdrawal from the Golan Heights. This, however, is no reason to stop talking to him. As long as Syria is interested in holding the negotiations, Israel should keep them up as well.

Netanyahu Camp Wins Majority in Secretariat Vote

TA2002124294 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Feb 94 p A6

[Report by party affairs correspondent Yerah Tal]

[Excerpts] Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu's supporters enjoy a majority in the new Likud Secretariat,

which was elected last Thursday [17 February]. Several central activists from the David Levi camp did not manage to get voted into the secretariat. Ya'aqov Berdugo, secretary general of the Union of Local Authorities in Israel, is one of those who failed to get elected. A series of municipal heads identified with the Levi camp were also voted out. [passage omitted]

A somewhat surprising fact is that eight persons newly elected to the secretariat are identified with Moshe Qatzav's camp. Altogether 29 secretariat seats were available. The other 32 slots were reserved for the Likud's Knesset members [MK's]. MK Netanyahu is not a member of the secretariat because one of its duties is to monitor and supervise his work. [passage omitted]

Netanyahu's associates expressed satisfaction with the results of the elections to the secretariat. They stated that those who declared they intend to "give Netanyahu a hard time" were not elected, while all of those elected who are not members of the Netanyahu camp are "suitable" candidates.

Levi camp members, on the other hand, claim it is misleading to depict the results as a defeat for the Levi camp. According to Levi's associates, this confrontation was not conducted on a partisan basis and the Levi camp did not promote any candidates.

High Turnout Reported in NRP Registration Campaign

TA2002144194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Feb 94 p A6

[Report by party affairs correspondent Yerah Tal]

[Excerpts] Approximately 30,000 people have registered themselves in the framework of the special National Religious Party [NRP] registration campaign, which started on 15 November 1993 and has just ended. NRP officials were surprised by the larger than expected turnout. According to NRP estimates, the number of registrants was expected to be far lower due to the campaign's low public profile.

NRP officials expressed the assessment that the relatively high turnout, which includes many new names, may lead to serious changes in the composition of the delegates to the NRP convention and in the party's list of candidates to the Knesset. The census was carried out prior to the internal elections for the party's convention and for the councils of the various branches, which will be held on 26 April 1994. [passage omitted]

The last NRP census was conducted seven years ago. That was also the last time the party held internal elections. Since then, the NRP has twice postponed the census with the approval of the movement's tribunal. Once, because the date of national elections was brought forward, and a second time due to the local council elections. [passage omitted]

NRP: Arabs Establishing 'Settlements' in Valley

TA2102194994 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Excerpts] The NRP [National Religious Party] has demanded that the government apply Israeli sovereignty to the Jordan Rift Valley settlements and declare them a security zone outside all political arrangements. This NRP demand was presented during a tour of the valley today. According to them, Palestinians are establishing settlements in the valley so as to endanger the Jewish majority there. Our territories correspondent Amir Hay reports:

The amazing revelation made by NRP leaders in the course of their tour of the Jordan Rift Valley was that Arab settlements are being established without permits. About 500 people have recently settled down in improvised structures in the al-Jiftliq area, and several hundred other families squatted in the area, in the words of the Jewish residents, establishing three more such centers. They arrived mostly from the Tubas and Janin areas. [passage omitted]

In less than three days, the Arab residents managed to set up an improvised mosque on the site. Jordan Valley residents claim that a 20-percent rise in unauthorized Arab settlement has been registered since the PLO-Israeli Declaration of Principles was signed. [passage omitted]

Technology Firm Selling Russian Satellite Photographs

TA2202193794 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Feb 94 p A5

[Report by security affairs correspondent Sharon Sade]

[Text] Militerm Technologies, an Israeli firm representing the Russian firm Sub-Inform-Sputnik, received from the latter air photographs taken by Russian satellites. There are no restrictions on the photographs which were obtained for a relatively low price. The up-to-date and high-resolution photographs were taken by intelligence satellites used by Russia, mainly for military purposes.

To promote sales, Militerm Technologies received from the Russians photographs of targets in Arab countries such as Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, etc. As far as is known, the Russian firm also owns similar photographs of locations in Israel and is in contact with Arab elements.

The Russian firm sells photographs taken by two types of satellites outfitted with high-resolution analog cameras: one satellite has a TK-350 topographic camera with a

resolution of 10 meters and a maximum range of 200 x 300 km. The second satellite is equipped with a precision KVR-1000 camera which takes photographs with a resolution of only 2 meters and has a range of 40 x 40 km.

The price tag for a photograph ranges from $1,250 for a printed photograph to $10,000 for a negative of a higher quality three- dimensional air photograph. Enclosed with the photographs are full information about the date the photograph was taken and the cloud cover over the area at the time.

It should be noted that the KVR-1000 satellite can take target photographs with a resolution of 25 centimeters, which is the precision required by military intelligence satellites. However, the Russians decided to downgrade the quality of the photographs for sale in the open market, and are at this point selling photographs with a resolution of 2 meters. Photography experts argue that this level of resolution enables excellent identification of military targets and locations. Militerm Technologies believes that within a few months it will be able to sell photographs with a resolution better than 2 meters.

Abu-Nidal 'Terrorists' Charged in Diplomat's Murder

AFP Reports 15 Arrests

NC2202144494 Paris AFP in English 1406 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, Feb 22 (AFP)—Jordanian police arrested 15 alleged members of Abu-Nidal's Palestinian "terrorist" group which is suspected of having killed a Jordanian diplomat in Beirut, a judicial source said here Tuesday [22 February].

The police on Saturday launched sweeps targeting Abu-Nidal's banned Fatah-Revolutionary Council movement, arresting fifteen persons and closing a trade office, the source told AFP.

The crackdown was decided after the Lebanese authorities had proved that Abu-Nidal's group was behind the killing of Jordan's embassy first secretary in Beirut, Na'ib al-Ma'ayitah, on January 29, the sources added.

Documents and propaganda leaflets were found in the trade office, located in the al-'Abdali neighborhood of the capital Amman.

Investigations are underway to determine if there is enough evidence to put the 15 on trial, the source said.

Most of the suspects have had already spent time in prison in the 1970s for their links to Abu-Nidal's group.

King Husayn on Feb 13 accused an Arab country of having ordered an extremist group whose leader lives in that country to carry out the murder. The king did not name the country but a Jordanian source said he was referring to Libya.

Tripoli has denied these accusations.

Other Members Apprehended

JN2202151394 Amman AKHIR KHABAR in Arabic 22-23 Feb 94 p 1

[Text] AKHIR KHABAR has learned that the security forces apprehended 30 members of Fatah-the Revolutionary Council [led by Abu Nidal] in Amman on Wednesday [16 February], and that 'Abbas al-Qaysi and Fathi Abu-Salimah were among those apprehended.

The wife of one of those apprehended informed AKHIR KHABAR that the security forces had asked 'Abbas al-Qaysi, a Amman-based Fatah-Revolutionary Council leader and former prisoner, to report to them. Meanwhile, they searched his house and detained him, along with others, most of whom were veteran prisoners who spent many long years in jail. They had been freed in early 1990.

'Plots,' Iranian Link Revealed

JN2202211794 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 23 Feb 94 p 4

[Report by Ra'id Salihah]

[Text] Swiftly, and without any prior notice, the security agencies arrested every member of Abu-Nidal's [Sabri al-Banna] Fatah-the Revolutionary Council group in Jordan in an operation that lasted no more than 48 hours. The operation started Saturday [19 February] morning and ended Sunday evening.

Despite the fact that the security agencies are keeping a tight lid on this swift operation, preliminary information leaked to AL-BILAD by well-informed sources reveals that the operation was only a warning message and a precautionary measure. At the same time, these sources confirmed that Syrian and Lebanese security agencies have separately obtained confessions from the individuals accused in the assassination of martyr Na'ib al-Ma'ayitah [Jordanian diplomat assassinated in Beirut on 29 January] to the effect that they had organizational links with Abu-Nidal's group. These sources also believe that members of the Abu-Nidal group in Jordan were deceived by their leadership, which convinced them that it had no connection whatsoever to al-Ma'ayitah's assassination.

AL-BILAD obtained a highly-classified file, supported by documents and information. The file shows, beyond any doubt, that some members of Abu-Nidal group intended to carry out bloody operations in Jordan. This was revealed in a secret leaflet, circulated on a very limited basis inside the group, which shows that the group is furious with the security agencies despite clear attempts by the group leaders in Jordan to label relations between the Revolutionary Council and Jordan as very calm.

The latest Revolutionary Council statement to reveal this hostile attitude appeared on 29 November 1993. The communique, stamped by the movement's official seal, cites a statement issued by the Central Committee of the Palestine National Liberation Movement-General Command of the al-'Asifah Forces-The Revolutionary Council. The statement says "...we urge every Arab citizen living on the land of our nation to realize the threats of the Judaization campaign. This campaign threatens destructive civil wars, which have started in Palestine today and are expected to explode on the Jordanian arena in the next few months. It is regrettable that in Jordan an agency, which has no work or mission but to pursue our movement's members and mujahidin, continues to exist." The same statement also notes that operations will be carried out this year without specifying where. The statement says "... we also stress to the concerned factions, which claim responsibility for operations we had the honor to carry out, that we cannot keep silent after 1 January 1994."

The statement vehemently attacks Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The same attack was reaffirmed in another statement issued by the Revolutionary Council on 1 January 1994 on the 29th anniversary of the movement [Fatah-the Revolutionary Council celebrates the same founding anniversary as that of the 'Arafat-led, PLO mainstream Fatah Movement]. However, it is worth noting that this statement did not mention Jordan at all.

This information seems bland when compared to the information leaked to AL-BILAD about the abortion of an

operation to smuggle missiles from Lebanon to the group in Jordan in order to carry out two serious operations in the Jordanian arena. One of these operations was aimed at blowing up a very sensitive target in Amman while the other was aimed at assassinating an important Palestinian figure in Amman. The planned date for carrying out these two operations was not clear. However, the information indicated that the operations were to be carried out on a single day during an occasion described as an important Palestinian occasion.

In another development, elements of the Abu-Nidal group have leaked information that an agreement on clear constants has been reached with Jordan. The most prominent of these constants is that, as a group in Jordan, they are not responsible for any publication the group sends from outside Jordan and that they are not committed to presenting any information on this issue. Moreover, the group stopped issuing the their weekly publication, which is of limited distribution, due to emergency circumstances.

According to AL-BILAD's information, pressure was also brought to bear by delaying the arrival in the Jordanian market, or banning altogether, the magazine FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH, the mouthpiece of the group.

AL-BILAD's investigations also revealed another plot by the Abu-Nidal group in Jordan, aimed at opening relations with Fatah-'Arafat cadres that have connections inside the occupied Arab territories, especially in terms of military action.

As part of this, the Abu-Nidal group's activities focused on Fatah cadres that oppose Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's actions, that have reservations about the peace agreement with Israel, or that have military groups or political activities in the occupied territories.

Part of this plan was an unsuccessful attempt by head the of the group in Jordan ('A.Q.) [initials as published] at contacts with 'Abbas Zaki, member of Fatah Central Council. Zaki was visited by this man, who came out with the impression that he could not cooperate or coordinate with Zaki.

The bases for cooperation outlined by Abu-Nidal elements are formed on a concentration on issues inside the occupied territories, on building an armed structure, and on preparedness for financing and facilitating the purchase of weapons.

Our investigations also revealed another secret plot by the Abu-Nidal group aimed at pursuing the pro-'Arafat elements and obtaining the greatest amount of information on their lives. The implementation of this major plan began a few months ago with noticeable briskness. According to AL-BILAD information, the required information concentrated on the following:

1. Details about these people's houses and their addresses. Is it rented or personal property? What is the rent or how much does the house cost?

2. Their financial situation; their personal property, bank accounts, cars, real estate, ranches, shops.

3. Names of sons, daughters; their schools, behavior, friends, how much money they spend. From which supermarket the family shops.

4. Social relations; what level; restaurants frequented by the them.

5. Female relations: following up these relations and documenting them.

Arab security sources told AL-BILAD that the Abu-Nidal group elements had claimed that the group did not want to do any harm to the pro-'Arafat' men, in accordance with a gentleman's agreement with Jordan. They said that all this information had been collected for future consideration and that their dossiers would be reopened in occupied Palestine later when the opportunity arose so that the Palestinian people would know the bloodsuckers who wasted their resources. Then the people would sentence them to death and confiscate all their possessions.

Security reports available to us also reveal another plot being implemented in complete secrecy. It reveals in detail how the new Abu-Nidal elements used to be dispatched to Iran and returned back to Jordan.

The amazing details show that youths coming from the occupied territories carrying permits allowing them a long time for study or tourism in Russia were later sent to Azerbaijan. Form there they would go to Iran by land through channels well-known to Iranian authorities. Their passports would not be stamped at their entry to Iran.

Reports say that the new elements would be grouped and trained by special and advanced courses. They would then be returned to Jordan in the same way. Those residing in the occupied territories, would leave Jordan for these territories. Dozens of Arab and Palestinian students studying in Russia would be recruited and sent to Iran for training during their university holidays.

Yasir 'Arafat Praises King's Efforts on Yemen

JN2102093394 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0900 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has left Amman after attending the signature of the Yemeni reconciliation and reform accord.

Mr. 'Arafat paid tribute to the efforts exerted by his majesty the king in bringing about the agreement between the parties of the political spectrum in Yemen. He described the signing of the accord as a historic and important incident that supported the pillars of the Yemeni unity.

He said the ratification of the accord by Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his deputy 'Ali Salim al-Bid is considered a beneficial action not only to Yemen but to the Arab nation as a whole.

King Receives Qatari Cable on Yemeni Accord

JN2202160794 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1500 gmt 22 fEB ' 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn has received a cable of congratulations from His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, the amir of Qatar, on the occasion of the signing of the Yemeni document of accord, which was held under the auspices of His Majesty King Husayn in Amman on Sunday, 20 February.

In the cable, his highness expressed his warmest congratulations to his majesty on the success of Jordanian efforts to reconcile the viewpoints of officials in the Yemeni leadership. He said: As we express our solidarity with your majesty's efforts toward cementing the rift in the Arab nation's facade and toward closing its ranks and uniting its word, we ask God the almighty to grant you continued health and happiness and your fraternal people more progress and prosperity.

His Majesty also received congratulatory cables on this pan-Arab occasion from His Highness Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, Qatar's heir apparent, and from the Lebanese defense minister in which they expressed their appreciation for his majesty's efforts in reuniting the Yemeni family and reinforcing Arab solidarity at this critical stage in the history of the Arab nation.

Al-Majali Briefs Cabinet on Yemeni Reconciliation

JN2202171494 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Excerpt] The cabinet held an ordinary session today under Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali. During the session, Dr. al-Majali presented a briefing on Jordan's pan-Arab role in the Yemeni reconciliation, which was crowned with the meeting of Yemeni leaders in Amman and the signing of the accord document by Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Yemeni Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, and all the leaders of the coalition and opposition parties. The document was drawn up by the Yemeni dialogue committee to end the political crisis in fraternal Yemen.

Dr. al-Majali said that the Yemenis' implementation of the document is aimed at leading Yemen to the shores of safety. He stressed that the Yemeni people are aware of this critical historic stage they are facing and that they will overcome it with success, God willing. [passage omitted]

Yemeni Accord Proves Ability To Settle Disputes

JN2102102294 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Feb 94 pp 1, 27

[Editorial: "Congratulations to the Yemenis... Congratulations to King Husayn"]

[Text] Yesterday, when the Yemeni brothers signed the document of pledge and accord, the Arabs experienced one of the brightest moments in recent times, and Jordanians witnessed a historic and dear event not experienced for a long time. Under the patronage of the great Hashemite leader, the Yemenis have thus turned a page and opened a new and glorious chapter in Yemen's modern history.

The signing ceremony held at sunset on 10 Ramadan was a rare scene in this nation's life. This nation followed the proceedings, carried live, while dearly hoping that all Arab issues will be resolved through dialogue, reconciliation, and accord. The nation also hopes that this reconciliation will create a new Arab tradition for resolving problems and settling disputes.

The ceremony which ended the political crisis in fraternal Yemen has tangibly highlighted this nation's ability to overcome its difficulties and crises when there is solid will, good intentions, and sincere efforts aimed only at securing the nation's interest and effecting Arab unity in the face of all elements of estrangement and division.

Thus, we view what happened at King Husayn's house, the Arabs' great house, as a praiseworthy turning point not only in the course of a crisis that concerns the brothers in happy Yemen, but also in this nation's situation. This nation has discovered a successful mode of action which, together with sincere efforts, may ultimately end the numerous seditions. Such seditions can only be overcome through dialogue, openness, and reconciliation, similar to this wonderful Yemeni model.

Such a great historic Yemeni event provides an opportunity to warmly congratulate our brothers in Yemen on this great national achievement, and also to extend congratulations, coupled with appreciation, to His Majesty King Husayn, whose sincere efforts and high Arab and Islamic status have largely contributed to realizing this achievement. This Yemeni domestic event has turned into a great pan-Arab celebration that translates the Hashemite conscience's deep yearning for Arab unity and pride and for establishing a new modern pan-Arab entity.

Saudi Aid To Jerusalem's Islamic Shrines Hailed

JN2202201094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Excerpt] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan today visited the second Hashemite exhibition on the reconstruction of the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, an exhibition on the reconstruction of the mosques named after the prophet's companions, and an exhibition on the achievements of the Ministry of Awqaf, Islamic Affairs and Holy Places being held at the exhibition hall in the Martyr King 'Abdallah Mosque. The details follow:

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan has expressed his happiness with the near completion of the second phase of the reconstruction of the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, which demonstrates further interest in improving the Arab and Islamic image in Jerusalem. His highness said that the maintenance and reconstruction of the sacred Islamic places are aimed at supporting the Arab Islamic identity in the holy land because this is a sacred matter and an inevitable duty.

His highness said that the completion of the maintenance and reconstruction work for the Islamic places in Jerusalem will have moral significance, especially during these days of the blessed month of Ramadan because good work is rated above all other considerations.

Answering a question by the Saudi Press Agency correspondent in Amman on his highness' feelings regarding the initiative of the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, concerning the collection of popular donations from all Saudi regions for reconstructing and saving the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem, his highness said: The decision by the custodian of the two holy mosques to support the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem, which is the first of the two qiblahs [direction to which a Muslim turns during his prayers] and the third holiest shrine, is a good decision and a lofty tradition, especially when it comes during the blessed month of Ramadan.

His highness added: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, led by His Majesty King Husayn, views this decision by Saudi Arabia with respect and appreciation because it contributes to supporting and strengthening the Arab nature of Jerusalem and protecting the Islamic shrines in it, a policy which Jordan—king, government, and people—has always sought to continue and promote through coordination and cooperation with all the Arab brothers. He asserted that this step by the Saudi brothers clearly contributes to realizing Arab solidarity. It is a continuation of the previous steps and stands of the custodian of the two holy mosques and the Saudi brothers toward the Islamic shrines in holy Jerusalem.

His highness said: Moreover, the Saudi steps can also be understood within the framework of promoting the Islamic appeal by His Majesty King Husayn concerning the religious authority [al-wilayah al-diniyah] in holy Jerusalem, an authority which recognizes only the moral sovereignty of God the Almighty, a sovereignty that takes into account the rights of the Muslims to express their historical and religious gains and to exercise their rights inside their city. He called on Arabs and Muslims to take the necessary measures to realize this religious authority and sovereignty over holy Jerusalem and the Islamic shrines.

His highness expressed his thanks and appreciation for the initiative of the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, in this blessed month and said: I can see that this initiative demonstrates an absolute interest by Saudi Arabia—king, government, and people—in the human contribution for the good of holy Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

[At 1800 GMT on 22 February Amman Jordan Television in Arabic carries a similar report that shows Crown Prince Hasan reading parts of the above statements from a prepared text.]

Al-Majali on French Minister's Visit, Bombings

NC1602123294 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 16 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, in Amman, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, happy Ramadan and welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Majali] Happy Ramadan to you and to all our Arab brothers, especially in fraternal Egypt.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Could you tell us what you discussed with French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe during his recent visit to Jordan?

[Al-Majali] The visit was very successful. It was meant for talks to promote bilateral relations, which have always been good in all areas, especially as far as France's economic support is concerned. France has always adopted a good and commendable position toward Jordan. We owe France a lot of money, and the minister promised that the French Government would reschedule this debt.

The French minister inquired about the progress in the peace process and about our expectations in this year. Our views were identical; we are both optimistic about the peace process, and we hope that in 1994 the peace moves will intensify and blossom, if not bear fruit.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Were there any new French proposals or views concerning the peace process?

[Al-Majali] There was nothing new, in fact. But they stressed that they support the peace process and expressed readiness to provide economic aid to the region. They are party to the multilateral talks, and many meetings have been held in Paris for this purpose. They also support the bilateral negotiations. They stressed their desire to play a bigger role. So far, France's role has been limited. We asked them, as an European country, to make further efforts to support the peace process. Relations between our countries and Europe are old and strong; we have links, and they have experience in this region. Undoubtedly, they can help in advancing the peace process.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] After His Majesty King Husayn's visit to Washington and Damascus, what are Jordan's next Arab and international moves?

[Al-Majali] Jordan always believes in common action and coordination with all Arab brothers. We believe that a comprehensive peace is [word indistinct] for all concerned parties. It is essential for the solution to be comprehensive, not partial. Much pressure has been put on Jordan to go it alone, but Jordan is firm, and does not agree to work individually. This position comes not from fanaticism or fear, but from belief that a general and comprehensive peace, not separate deals, is in the interest of all states of the region. Therefore, we always believe in coordination, especially with the United States, concerning bilateral and peace issues. I believe the United States clearly understood this.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Mr. Prime Minister, you have stated that you believe in inter-Arab coordination and collective Arab action. What about the reports that say Jordan has actually reached a peace agreement with Israel that only needs to be made public?

[Al-Majali] This is untrue, a rumor. Of course, we are hoping to reach an agreement but so far it has not happened. Apart from signing an agenda of the talks, nothing has occurred. However, some issues are being discussed in depth, including the reopening of Jordanian banks in the West Bank. This is finished and done with. No peace agreement, in the true sense of the word, has been reached, although some issues are clarified and accepted by both sides.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Prime Minister, one last question. According to some reports, foreign countries are trying to destabilize Jordan, to undermine its security. What is Jordan's position on these reports? How true are they?

[Al-Majali] We deeply regret the fact that there are some extremists who oppose the peace process. We believe in a constructive opposition but not an opposition that resorts to violence, assassinations, bombings, and the murder of innocent people. This is not opposition. These are acts that the Arab world is disgusted with and cannot accept, particularly as there is room for dialogue and discussion. Some people believe in violence but our people's steadfastness can effectively and manfully face whatever happens. We will not submit to any party that seeks to intimidate and terrorize us.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Prime Minister, we wish you a good Ramadan. Thank you very much.

[Al-Majali] A good Ramadan to you in Egypt and to the whole Arab and Islamic world. We thank the Voice of the Arabs.

Displaced Persons Policy Coordinated With PLO

JN1902100194 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 19 Feb 94 p 3

[Text] Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) are seeking to coordinate their positions on negotiations with Israel on the fate of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons and then to bring in Egypt before actually opening quartiparite talks on the issue, officials said Friday [18 February].

The decision to hold prior coordination among the Arab sides to a four-party (Palestinian-Jordanian-Egyptian-Israeli) committee, which is proposed in the Sept. 13 autonomy agreement between Israel and the PLO, was taken during last week's Jordan-PLO meetings, the officials said.

A sub-committee on refugees and displaced persons met on the sidelines of meetings of the higher Jordan-PLO Joint Committee attended by Deputy Prime Minister Sa'id al-Tall and PLO foreign affairs chief Faruq Qaddumi.

Minister of State 'Adil Irshayd and PLO Executive Committee member Samir Ghawshah (Popular Struggle Front) chaired the sub-committee meetings, which submitted its recommendations to the higher committee, the official said.

The Jordanian stand during the meeting was that prior coordination was a must among the Arab parties concerned before launching the proposed four-party committee and this was accepted by the PLO side, they said.

Jordan has been refusing to entertain the idea of the four-party committee, which was sprung as a surprise to the Kingdom along with the secret autonomy accord negotiated by Israel and the PLO.

Information Minister Jawad al-'Anani said: "We believe in the conceptual approach to the issue; coordination between ourselves (Jordan and the PLO) first and then with Egypt before proceeding further."

Dr. al-'Anani said no date had been set for the first meeting of the proposed four-party committee. Reports from Cairo and Tunis said it could take place in April.

But Dr. al-'Anani indicated that the meeting would not take place until Jordan is satisfied that the Kingdom, the PLO and Egypt have coordinated their positions and are able to present a common stand to present in this context.

The Jordan-PLO coordination is expected to be consolidated during a meeting next week of the joint sub-committee before the two sides approach Egypt, said Omar Khatib, the deputy chief of mission at the Palestinian embassy here.

"The decision of the sub-committee was clear. Any negotiations with Israel over the fate of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons should be based on related U.N. resolutions regardless of any other considerations," Mr. Khatib told the JORDAN TIMES.

U.N. Resolution 194 upholds the right of the Palestinian refugees of 1948 to return home or receive compensation. Resolutions issued since then uphold the same principle and call for an equitable solution to the problem of refugees.

Mr. Khatib said Jordan and the PLO were awaiting the outcome of the ongoing Israel-PLO negotiations in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Taba before formulating further steps. He indicated that the Taba talks could produce a clear Israeli stand on how the Jewish state intended to handle the issue of displaced Palestinians.

"We have to have a very clear perception of our own positions and options before we sit down with Israel (in the four-party committee); that is what Jordan and the PLO are trying to acheive," said Mr. Khatib.

During last week's talks, Jordan agreed to conduct a census of displaced Palestinians living in the Kingdom for documentation purposes and eventually to find out how many of them would like to return to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

On Feb. 1, Egypt launched a similar survey of Palestinians from Gaza living in Arab countries after starting a census in its own teritory. It plans to close the enumeration on April 15.

Response to the Egyptian census in Jordan has been very slow, diplomatic sources said.

Palestinian "refugees" are classified as those who fled or were forced to flee their homes in Palestine when the state of Israel was created in 1948. Many of them ended up in refugee camps in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank only to be turned out again and forced across the Jordan River in the 1967 war.

They were joined by many natives of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the flight; and these are classified as "displaced persons"—meaning that they were displaced from their homes, not refugee camps, in the occupied territories.

According to PLO statistics, the number of Palestinians "displaced" from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip during the 1967 war and their dependents now stands at 875,000.

"The majority of them are living in Jordan, and the rest are in Egypt," said Mr. Khatib. "Very few of them are in Syria or elswhere."

The Sep. 13 autonomy accord puts off any Israel-PLO discussion of the "refugees" until the "final status negotiations slated to be in in the third year of Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories.

But the issue of refugees and displaced persons is a prominent item on the agenda signed on Sept. 14 for peace negotiations between Jordan and Israel, thus making the Kingdom the only Arab party dealing with the subject until the final status negotiations.

Jordanian officials say it was a significant achievement for Jordan that it managed to include the issue as a topic for bilateral negotiations. They say that Jordan's approach to the issue with Israel is on a state-to-state level with no prejudice of the right of the refugees to return home or receive compensation.

Jordan is demanding compensation for having hosted Palestinian refugees on its soil. It points out that the refugee problem was a result of the creation of the state of Israel and as such Israel has a direct responsibility to address its consequences.

Israel has ruled out the return of any massive number of Palestinians, but has agreed to consider allowing an unspecified but limited number to return, and both Jordanian and PLO officials say they expect the issue to be one of the most thorny in negotiations.

U.S. Ambassador, Delegation Meet al-Hariri, Others

Al-Hariri Receives Entourage

NC1802135794 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 18 Feb 94

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri today received U.S. Ambassador Mark Hambley and a visiting U.S. military delegation.

After the meeting, the U.S. ambassador expressed his belief that there will be an opportunity for a truce in Lebanon. He said: What is certain is that the only road to peace in the region is through negotiations. He added that the United States, as well as the Lebanese Government and all other governments, wants to see a peaceful solution in Lebanon.

Ambassador Hambley said the U.S. military delegation and the prime minister discussed a cooperation program between Lebanon and the United States that began a year and a half ago and that the discussion dealt with some future moves. This visit, he remarked, is the first in a series of visits scheduled for the delegation.

Asked about the likely role of the delegation in the south, Hambley said: We have no details on this matter. No doubt the Lebanese Armed Forces will play a very important role in south Lebanon. We want to help the Lebanese Armed Forces so that they are fully equipped in the future. He referred to a technical training program in addition to some equipment the United States will provide for the Army.

Israeli Warning in U.S. Message

NC2002095494 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 20 Feb 94

[Text] Dr. Amin al-Hafiz, former prime minister and chairman of the Chamber of Deputies' Foreign Affairs Committee, has stated that the message delivered by U.S. Ambassador Mark Hambley to Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz contains an Israeli warning over what is happening in southern Lebanon.

Al-Hafiz stressed that if the peace process gives Israel everything it wants, then it is not a peace process but a surrender process.

Hambley Confers With Berri

NC2202163894 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Today, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri met U.S. Ambassador Mark Hambley in the Chamber headquarters. Hambley said afterward: I wanted to talk to Speaker Birri about particular incidents that occurred last week and to discuss developments in south Lebanon and to express my belief that controlling the situation there is very important. Right now we are focusing on the Washington talks. But we seek to stop these attacks, which, I believe, only hinder the ongoing peace process.

The U.S. ambassador was asked about his remark that only conciliation will solve the problem in south Lebanon. A reporter asked him what he meant by conciliation and with whom. He said: I believe the basic point needed to secure and maintain the ongoing process in Washington is to reach solutions that will bring peace to the entire Middle East region. This includes all the parties concerned with peace, in other words, Lebanon, Israel, Syria, and all the other parties. We must maintain the dialogue in Washington to reach the desired solutions.

Hambley was asked about the positive signs that emerged after the Geneva summit and about the talks remaining stagnant. Asked whether there is a way to push the talks ahead, he replied: I think some progress has been made since the talks resumed in Washington. We are not imposing a specific time limit on negotiators. So we cannot expect instant results. The negotiating process is too complicated to make rapid progress. What counts is to finally see progress in the right direction leading to solutions that are acceptable to everyone.

The ambassador was asked about his call to disarm the Resistance and about his country's failure to put pressure on Israel to implement international resolutions and withdraw from the south. He said: Our stance on Resolution 425 is very clear. We want to see the foreign troops withdraw from Lebanon, as he put it. He added: We hope the Washington talks will be a gateway to that goal so that the security and other guarantees can be provided. We hope they will guarantee peaceful relations among all the parties concerned.

Hambley was asked about the repeated U.S. remark that the Americans are helping Lebanon at a time when the State Department has issued a decision extending the ban on Americans traveling to Lebanon. Asked to explain this contradiction, he said: This is a very important question. But we must distinguish between a decision banning the travel of U.S. passport holders, which is based purely on affairs relating to security [sentence incomplete as heard]. He added: We can only hope the future will show some signs that allow us to revoke that decision. It is very important to us to guarantee the safety of our sons who visit Lebanon. This is the U.S. Government's main concern. The second issue, he added, does not mean we did not launch cooperation programs with the Lebanese Government. Although cooperation is small, it is continuous and we hope it will be expanded.

Three-Round 'Summit' in Damascus Detailed

NC2102081094 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Excerpts] The three-round Lebanese-Syrian summit, which lasted for seven hours, dealt with the tense situation in the south, developments in the peace process, and the internal Lebanese situation, particularly the regime's actions in the political and reconstruction fields.

President al-Hirawi returned to Beirut last night at the end of the Damascus summit.

Our correspondent in Damascus has reported that the first round of talks lasted three and half hours and was attended by Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam. The two leaders discussed the progress made so far on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks in Washington and Israel's attempts to circumvent Resolution 425. The talks also dealt with the U.S. message that warns about the explosive situation in the south.

The two presidents' views were identical on the need to continue coordination between the two countries to confront internal and external developments.

During the second round of talks, Presidents al-Hirawi and al- Asad discussed the internal situation and bilateral relations. [passage omitted]

The two leaders concluded their summit with a third round of talks in which Khaddam, Prime Minister al-Zu'bi, and Foreign Minister al-Shar' attended. The talks dealt with the developments in the region after the Geneva summit and the Arab situation in light of the visits to Damascus by a number of Arab leaders. The two sides also touched on issues of mutual interest.

The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY cited presidential sources as saying that President al-Hirawi raised all issues pertaining to Israel's aggressive designs in the south and western al-Biqa'. President al-Hirawi also briefed the Syrian officials on the course of the Lebanese-Syrian negotiations. He was briefed on the progress made in the Syrian-Israeli negotiations.

According to knowledgeable sources, the local Lebanese situation was also discussed during the summit, particularly amid increasing parliamentary opposition. It has been learned that the two presidents stressed the need for the government to promote its efforts by patching up the differences of a number of ministries and the dispute between the Labor Ministry and trade unions.

Citing a Syrian official, REUTER reported that Israel is responsible for the failure to achieve any progress in the peace negotiations. Israel still refuses to abide by the peace process and implement the UN resolutions, according to REUTER. The Syrian official emphasized that Israel's failure to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories means that the negotiations have not achieved the desired objective.

Security Meeting Discusses Israeli 'Attacks'

NC2202103194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi chaired an expanded security meeting at the B'abda Palace this morning. Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul, Interior Minister Bisharah Mirhij, and security officers were present.

At the end of the meeting, Interior Minister Mirhij made the following statement:

[Begin recording] [Mirhij] The meeting, which was held at the presidential palace this morning under the chairmanship of the president, was devoted to discussion of all aspects of the security situation in the country. The conferees dealt with all topics pertaining to security throughout the country. The conferees decided to instruct all security services to adopt measures that would safeguard the public security in the country and the citizens' rights in Lebanon. All security topics on the agenda were discussed in depth.

We also discussed the elections in the north and construction violations. We touched on issues on the south as well as all issues related to security.

[Unidentified correspondent] As for the repeated Israeli attacks, can we know what measures were taken at today's meeting to deter the repeated Israeli attacks on the south?

[Mirhij] The whole Lebanese state is in a state of resistance. It rejects occupation and mobilizes all its efforts for the sake of ensuring the withdrawal of the Israeli enemy from our land in the south. We do not approve of any operation that harms the state's responsibility in south Lebanon.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, concerning the bombing of the Phalangist Party headquarters, have the investigations revealed anything in this regard?

[Mirhij] The investigations into the bombing of the Phalangist Party headquarters are still going on. The Lebanese judiciary is now in charge of the case and it continues its work in this regard. [end recording]

Mirhij on Israel's Intentions, Resistance

NC1902133094 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 19 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Interior Minister Bisharah Mirhij has affirmed that resistance is a result of the occupation. Lebanon has not violated the rules of the game, he said.

The interior minister denied that Katuysha rockets were fired at northern Israel. This might have happened and might not, he retorted. He wondered why Israel is not brought to account for firing shells at south Lebanon.

In an interview on Radio Free Lebanon's "Responsible Talk" program, Mirhij said that Israel is trying to put pressure on the Lebanese people and state to adjust Lebanon's political stand to Israel's interests. We support any action our people undertake in support of the resistance on their land, he said; adding: This is a natural right.

Asked if it is likely that Israel will launch a large-scale military operation in Lebanon, Mirhij said: Everything is possible. We are preparing for all possibilities. So far, signs coming from Israel's direction are certainly not peaceful, he said.

The interior minister added: We insist on having understanding and coordination with Syria. We will not deviate from that course, because it enables Lebanon to adopt the

right attitude. Mirhij believes that Israel was not comfortable with the Geneva summit because it emphasized Syria's regional power. [passage omitted]

Asked if it will be possible to guarantee the necessary security for the Pope's visit, Mirhij said: If we were not capable of doing that we would not have taken the initiative. [passage omitted]

Asked about Palestinians in Lebanon, Mirhij affirmed that they have rights as Arab subjects living on Lebanese territory against their will. Until they return to their homeland, they will be treated as brothers and Arabs, he said. [passage omitted]

Israel Reportedly Annexes 'Vast Areas'

NC2202212494 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 11 Feb 94 p 7

[Text] Security information from inside the occupied strip reports that the Zionist occupation forces recently sliced off vast areas of Lebanese territory in the hills of Saddanah which lie alongside al-Majidiyah farm at the southwestern corner of the Golan Heights and annexed them to the occupied territories.

Citing eyewitnesses, the reports said that the Israelis have built asphalt roads through the al-Malikiyah gateway, which they set up in 1948, to these hills, which they now have linked to the farms in Shab'a. They occupied the latter in 1967. The reports add that the occupation forces set up many camps and observation posts in these heights and surrounded them with barbed wire. In addition, they set up iron pillars, flood lights, and other military equipment. They also imposed a curfew under the pretext that these are military areas. It is worth noting here that the Israelis established many settlements among the farms of Shab'a and built roads linking them to the Tiberias area many years ago.

FRC Reportedly Provides Protection for Deputy

NC2302115694 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 21 Feb 94 p 7

[Text] The Lebanese judiciary is eager to handle the murder of the Jordanian diplomat Na'ib 'Umran al-Ma'ayitah with extreme delicacy and secure the defense for those charged with the murder, who belong to the Abu-Nidal-led Fatah Movement—the Revolutionary Council [FRC]. The defendants are interrogated in the presence of Bisharah Abu-Sa'd, a lawyer who is a partner and the brother-in-law of Deputy Najah Wakim.

AL-SHIRA' previously reported that the Abu-Nidal group undertakes the personal protection of Deputy Wakim by providing him with a permanent escort of armed men. Hence, Wakim adheres to the FRC line and adopts it in his political positions.

Palestinian Killed in Sidon for 'Moral Reasons'

NC2302120994 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] In Sidon today, Palestinian Muhammad Sa'id al-Sayigh was killed and his daughters Ruwaydah and Rana wounded when explosives placed under the driver's seat in his Toyota went off. There was an estimated half a kg of explosives.

Our correspondent learned that the crime was committed for moral reasons and that the deceased had distributed pornographic films that prompted opposition from Islamic groups in Sidon.

Announcement Made Concerning Basil al-Asad's Duties

PM2202143594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Feb 94 p 1

[Excerpts] Damascus—A prominent Syrian figure yesterday said in an official, open, and clear manner that Dr. Bashshar al-Asad, President Hafiz al-Asad's second eldest son, will assume the duties which used to be carried out by his brother Staff Major Basil al-Asad, who was killed in a car crash last month.

This announcement came in a lecture delivered by Dr. Bahjat Sulayman, a senior and influential political figure very close to President Hafiz al-Asad. He said: The masses in Syria see in Dr. Bashshar al-Asad a guarantee and a symbol needed for the continuation and stability of Hafiz al-Asad's line. [passage omitted]

There have been numerous indications since Basil al-Asad's death that Dr. Bashshar al-Asad is going to carry the leadership banner and continue the big aspirations launched by his brother, Basil.

Dr. Bashshar al-Asad is an ophthalmologist who was preparing to specialize in a European state when he heard the news of his brother Basil's death.

Former al-Asad 'Rival' Reportedly Freed From Jail

NC2202142294 Paris AFP in English 1347 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, Feb 22 (AFP)—A one-time rival of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, General Ahmad al-Suwaydani, has been freed after spending 25 years in jail, a former inmate said here Tuesday [22 February].

Mujalli Nasrawin, a Jordanian who used to be a member of the Ba'th party which rules Syria and Iraq, told AFP that al-Suwaydani was freed on Monday for health reasons.

Himself released from a Syrian jail after 22 years, Nasrawin had called Saturday on Damascus to free al-Suwaydani, expressing fears he might die in al-Mazzah prison after having suffered an attack of hemiplegia.

Al-Suwaydani, a Sunni Moslem, was army chief-of-staff on the side of Salah Jadid, whose Ba'th party faction clashed with al-Asad's in the late 1960s.

At that time al-Asad, an Alawite Moslem, was air force chief under president Nur-al-Din al-Atasi, a Sunni.

In 1968, al-Asad ousted al-Suwaydani, who was jailed a year later. In a 1970 coup, al-Asad overthrew al-Atasi to take over as president.

Al-Atasi was freed in April 1992 and died last December in a Paris hospital, while Jadid died last August in a Damascus jail.

Some 20 political prisoners have been in jail in Syria for more than 20 years, most of them arrested during al-Asad's coup, according to international human rights groups.

Al-Hirawi, al-Asad Discuss Peace, Other Issues

Coordination Needs Discussed

NC2002193494 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 20 Feb 94

[Text] Summit talks between Presidents Ilyas al-Hirawi and Hafiz al-Asad are still under way. According to our Damascus correspondent, the two presidents met for three and a half hours today. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam attended part of the talks.

Our correspondent cites sources close to the talks as saying that the two presidents discussed Lebanese-Israeli talks, the conditions made by Israel, and Israel's position concerning UN Security Council Resolution 425. The Lebanese and Syrian presidents also reviewed U.S. views concerning Lebanese-Israeli talks and the U.S. message to Lebanon, which warns of the repercussions of the volatile situation in the south. Al-Hirawi and al-Asad stressed the need for coordination between their countries in matters of domestic, foreign, diplomatic, and security policy.

The two presidents met again this afternoon. Sources close to the talks say that various domestic issues will be discussed in that session.

Regional Conditions Examined

JN2002195294 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Feb 94

[Text] At 1145 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam attended.

This was followed by a closed meeting between the two presidents. Discussion revolved around the conditions and developments in the region, the peace process, and issues of mutual concern.

President al-Hirawi joined the president at a fast-breaking banquet. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' were invited to the banquet.

President Hafiz al-Asad and President Ilyas al-Hirawi resumed their talks at 1830 today in a meeting they held at the Presidential Palace. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

No 'Separate Peace Accords' Pledged

JN2102193294 Manama WAKH in English 1645 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] Damascus, Feb 21 (GNA)—Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi agreed during their talks here on Sunday [20 February] to adhere to the principle of a comprehensive settlement in the region, reliable Syrian sources said.

The sources told Qatar News Agency that the two leaders also pledged not to sign a unilateral peace accord with Israel, and that progress should be achieved on all tracks.

The two leaders denounced Israeli attempts to reach separate peace accords with Arab states involved in the peace process and expressed strong support for the comprehensive peace formula based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the sources said. The sources noted that Syria emphasized that it was politically committed to working for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 425 calling on Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon.

The sources said Syria has already turned down an Israeli offer to separate the question of the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights from the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon, and at the same time, Syria reaffirmed that a balanced solution should be achieved on all tracks.

Syria has succeeded in convincing the United States, via recent contacts between Damascus and Washington, about the importance of implementing Security Council Resolution 425, the sources said.

Paper Accuses Israel of Hampering U.S.-Syria Ties

NC1902105694 Paris AFP in English 1021 GMT 19 Feb 94

[Text] Damascus, Feb 19 (AFP)—Israel is trying to prevent Syria and the United States from establishing normal relations, the official Syrian daily AL-THAWRAH charged Saturday [19 February].

The paper said Israel "is anxious to detach Syrian-U.S. relations from the area of dialogue," fearing that "solid, balanced relations may be established, enabling the whole peace process to be brought back to its legitimate basis."

Israel was escalating tension in south Lebanon "in its customary arrogant and aggressive way," in order to pressure U.S. President Bill Clinton into "ending or postponing the U.S. role in the peace process," AL-THAWRAH said.

Israel tried to torpedo the Geneva summit meeting between Clinton and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad on January 16 "through pressure and intensive moves inside the U.S. administration and in the region," the paper added.

"However, we believe the Clinton administration is aware of these moves and what lies behind them."

Israel and Syria failed to make headway during peace talks in Washington earlier in the week, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin told reporters Thursday.

Asked whether Israel had moved closer to the Syrian demand that Israel fully withdraw from the Golan Heights seized in 1967 and partially annexed in 1981, Beilin said, "regrettably, no."

Israel has refused to withdraw without first getting security guarantees from Syria.

Israel threatened to launch a massive operation in south Lebanon after a rocket attack on northern Israel on Wednesday, which was claimed by PLO dissidents opposed to the Palestinian autonomy deal.

The attack provoked intense diplomatic moves by the United States, with Washington sending messages to Damascus and Beirut calling for restraint.

Israel blamed Syria, which has some 35,000 troops in Lebanon.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said the attack was a "violation" of a U.S.-brokered deal with Damascus last July to halt Hizballah guerrilla strikes on Jewish communities.

The deal followed a seven-day blitz by Israeli forces in south Lebanon which killed 132 people and wounded 500.

Al-Shar' Receives Romanian Official, Message

JN2102114594 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0945 GMT 21 Feb 94

[Text] Damascus, 21 Feb (SANA)—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this morning received Nicolae Robotan, director of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [name and title as received]. He also received a message from Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Malescanu.

Talks during the meeting dealt with ways to enhance bilateral relations in various fields, as well as the regional peace process.

Al-Asad Receives Message From Pakistan's Bhutto

JN1902142694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 19 Feb 94

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received a message from Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

The message was handed to Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' at a meeting this morning with Mr. Khan, the special envoy of the Pakistani prime minister.

The meeting was attended by the minister's assistant, Ruslan 'Allush; the director of the Asia Desk, Walid Rajab; and the Pakistani ambassador in Damascus, Naimul Hasan.

Discussion at the meeting dealt with the situation in Kashmir.

Iran

Ministry Spokesman Comments on Sending Troops to Bosnia

LD2302080094 Tehran IRNA in English 0627 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 23, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran has volunteered to contribute to the United Nations peacekeeping troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina but the response by the U.N. implies unexplainable wariness, said an Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman here Tuesday.

The spokesman, Mahmoud Mohammadi, told IRNA that Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati had informed the U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali of Iran's preparedness to do so and was awaiting the U.N. response to mobilize troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina under the supervision of the United Nations.

He said Iran's proposal had been previously upheld by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and by the last assembly of the foreign ministers of the nonaligned countries in Jakarta earlier this month.

Asked to comment on NATO's ultimatum to Serbian forces, he said NATO had not demanded the Serbs to end their siege of Sarajevo but simply to distance their artillery pieces from the besieged Muslim city. As far as NATO is concerned, he added, the ultimatum was solely a propaganda device for face-saving and for breaking NATO's long silence and not as a genuine warning to the Serbs.

Commenting on the current negotiations in Tehran between Iranian officials and members of an Iraqi delegation who are here since last Thursday, he said that the main topic in their agenda is that of the prisoners of war, adding that a joint committee of officials of the two countries were proceeding with the task.

The second most important item in the talks with the Iraqis, he said, is that of the fate of a number of Iraqi warplanes that were allowed to land in Iran immediately before the outbreak of the war of the allied powers with Iraq for its invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

He said the Chinese Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foregin Affairs Qian Qichen is to arrive in Tehran for a three-day official visit Friday 4 march.

The Chinese minister's talks with the Iranian officials, the spokesman noted, would focus primarily on bilateral relations, mutual cooperation at international organizations, and also cooperation in Central Asia.

Leader Says Time 'Appropriate' Time for Rushdie Sentence

LD2202140694 Tehran IRNA in English 1314 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 22, IRNA—Head of the 15th of Khordad Foundation (which has set a prize for Salman Rushdie's head), Ayatollah Hasan Sane'i believes that the time is now appropriate to carry out the death sentence against the apostate author of 'The Satanic Verses.'

The morning daily 'JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI' quoted Ayatollah Sane'i as saying that five years after the death verdict was issued against the Indian-born British author, the world Muslims now fully realised the matter.

The desperate attempts of Rushdie and his western backers too have only failed to lift the verdict and have only added to Muslims' wrath. 'Today the situation is appropriate more than any other time for the execution of Salman Rushdie,' the ayatollah stressed.

Ayatollah Sane'i underlined that the Islamic countries solidarity as well as the Organization of Islamic Conference's (OIC) renewed support for the verdict against Rushdie as factors paving the way to carry out the death decree.

According to western media, the ayatollah said, Rushdie was gradually dying and even the police protection failed to improve his morale. 'It is the fate of anyone who insults Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and over one billion Muslims' sanctities.'

Referring to formation of some European committees to support the apostate writer, the ayatollah said their act too was an insult to the sanctities of Muslims.

Deputies Vote on Candidate for Culture Minister

LD2202091094 Tehran IRNA in English 0742 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 22, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Tuesday introduced his candidate for the post of minister of culture and Islamic guidance Mostafa Mirsalim to Majlis deputies who are to cast their votes on him today. Addressing the deputies, Rafsanjani referred to Mirsalim as a "veteran revolutionary" with a record of political and cultural activities since being a university student. He noted that the leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i is highly satisfied with Mirsalim. "He used to be one of my active advisors with a prominant role in the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution," Rafsanjani added.

He said he expected that Mirsalim, "gaining a powerful vote of the Majlis, would enjoy a good executive support for fulfilling this difficult task."

Rafsanjani also appreciated the services of 'Ali Larijani who vacated the ministerial seat after being appointed by the leader as the new chief of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB).

[Tehran IRNA in English at 0754 GMT on 22 February, in another Tehran-datelined item, adds the following: "Mostafa Mirsalim, the candidate for the post of minister of culture and Islamic guidance, received a vote of confidence from Majlis deputies here Tuesday. Out of 224 deputies present in the Majlis session today, 178 voted for,

27 against and 19 abstained. Mirsalim, 46, is a postgraduate of mechanics. He previously served in many key posts such as deputy interior minister and presidential advisor."]

Mirsalim Appointment Favored

LD2202120394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] After President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's speech and since there were no deputies who had registered their names to speak against Mr. Mirsalim's ministerial appointment, three deputies spoke in favor of his appointment. They pointed to the sensitive nature of the current situation and the importance of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic guidance's responsibilities. They considered that Mr. Mirsalim was qualified for the post.

Next, Mr. Mostafa Mirsalim, minister of culture and Islamic guidance, explained the main points of his programs aimed at achieving the cultural objectives of the revolution. He described the extensive dimensions of the western cultural onslaught against Islamic culture. He said: In confronting such an onslaught, we should safeguard our indigenous culture and Islamic values with all our being. He emphasized: The most important factor in spiritual growth is to raise the cultural level of the public and this is a priority and an essential part of our work. All programs should be formulated and supplied within the framework of Islamic values.

The minister of culture and Islamic guidance said that the lack of clear opinions based on religious jurisprudence that could resolve certain matters concerning the art world, the unequal distribution of art facilities in the country, and also the question of training and retraining of specialized and effective managers for the cultural and art sectors of the country, are among existing bottlenecks. He hoped that through the efforts of relevant officials, these bottlenecks will be removed as soon as possible.

Mirsalim Comments

LD2202122094 Tehran IRNA in English 1157 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 22, IRNA—Mostafa Mirsalim who received a vote of confidence from the Majlis as the new minister of culture and Islamic guidance earlier today, outlined his programs after President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani introduced him to the deputies.

Mirsalim thanked the leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i and President Rafsanjani for their confidence in him and disclosed the western conspiracies against the Islamic Republic.

He underlined the importance of the Islamic culture for the Iranian nation and said today's world is faced with the domination-seeking tendencies of certain heinous states who insist to score cultural supremacy through dominating over other nations so as to pave the way for pocketing more interests.

Underlining the extensive dimension of the cultural assault, he said that only last year, 40 European and American research centers have published 214 books and 300 articles on Iran and Islam while 16 counterrevolutionary and eight foreign radio stations broadcast programs in Persian. He added that 1,100 counterrevolutionary t.v. stations also broadcast programs in Persian and 214 publishing centers of Iranians and non-Iranians abroad distributed 315 books in Persian in an effort to mock the Islamic values and to level accusations against Iran.

Giving more statistics, he also said that 310 cultural centers abroad were engaged in activities against the Persian and Islamic culture through publishing materials in 114 periodicals in Persian while world's leading publications have published 110 articles on Iran and Islam.

Moreover, he added, eight world conferences were held on Iran during the period including the one on Iran-U.S. relations known as Clinton conference.

The minister underlined that cultural growth is more important than economic and social growth. Mirsalim noted that language is the main medium for transfer of cultural concepts and that he plans to make efforts towards "preserving and strengthening the eloquent Persian language while at the same time to refine the language of alien words." He added that efforts will also be made to promote Persian in other regions particluarly in Persian speaking countries.

As another domain of his plans, he said that he will protect the rights of the writers and artists and systematize cultural and research centers.

As far as cultural relations with foreign countries are concerned, he said that facilities would be provided for cultural cooperation with the Central Asian states while such cooperation with Pakistan and Afghanistan would be strengthened and cultural ties with the Persian Gulf littoral states would be continued.

Bilateral Cooperation Discussed With Australia

LD2202105894 Tehran IRNA in English 0938 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 22, IRNA—The visiting Australian Deputy Foreign Minister, Rig Smith, in a meeting here today with Agriculture Minister 'Isa Kalantari discussed bilateral trade as well as cultural and diplomatic cooperation.

Kalantari who is also head of the Iran-Australia joint economic commission called for a trade balance between the two countries as well as the expansion of ties in all fields.

Heading a delegation, Smith arrived here Monday.

Commentary Decries U.S. Actions in Sudan

LD2102124394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 gmt 21 feb 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] The American ambassador to Sudan, in an unprecedented and unjustified act, and without the consent of the Sudanese Government, entered southern Sudan across the Kenyan border and visited rebel occupied areas. According to Sudanese officials his visit was aimed at encouraging and equipping the rebels, who have recently suffered heavy defeats.

The action, which was taken on the orders of American President Clinton, is an undisputed violation of Sudanese national sovereignty and ridicules the definite principles of international law.

The American Government's intervention reveals the long standing support given by this country to the southern Sudanese cessationists and adds a page to the bulky record of state terrorism by Washington's leaders.

In a similar action, in coordination with the British ambassador to Sudan, the Archbishop of Canterbury also travelled to southern Sudan some while ago, but this led to a firm response by the Sudanese Government and the expulsion of the British ambassador from the country.

At the time the Sudanese Government also warned the U.S. ambassador regarding intervention in Sudan's internal affairs and support for terrorism, and called on him to be aware of the consequences of such actions.

However, with no concern for the warnings, America, while leading the Western world, continued to increase pressure on Sudan in various ways from both inside and abroad.

The propaganda horns were once again sounded to poison public opinion, while standard Western practices used to bring down independent countries refusing submission were put into effect—countries which in the opinion of the West are enemies because they are not in the Western camp. Reports on violations of human rights and of Sudanese Government support for terrorism were transmitted constantly. Seminars and congresses by the Sudanese opposition in Western countries were given priority news coverage, and there were even reports about direct Western intervention to divide the country. Western crocodile tears were shed in sympathy with minorities in southern Sudan, while Western governments not only turn a blind eye to the rights of the majority in various parts of the world, including Bosnia and Algeria, but are active in denying these rights by cooperating with the violators. [passage omitted].

Obviously, in the final analysis the West will have to bear the negative consequences of these irresponsible actions and double-standard policies. Such actions will only increase instability in the international order and will lead the world toward new chaos and disorder.

Commentary Examines Situation in Algeria, Violence

NC2202092094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] The assassination of a French citizen in Algiers and the violent incidents of the past few days in several Algerian cities confirm that opposition has rekindled after about one month of calm. The recent clashes between government forces and Islamists resulted in 30 deaths on both sides. Opposition forces in Sidi Bel Abbes have attacked and set fire to government offices and institutions and gas station workers have gone on strike.

The resumption of such incidents in Algeria shows that the period of optimism toward the government of Algerian President General Zeroual has ended and, having given up all hopes for any type of political reform by the government, the opposition has once again resorted to struggle.

Since coming to power one month ago, General Zeroual, who was designated as president by the former coup council, has been constantly announcing that he will soon pave the way for a national reconciliation and will start talks with the opposition. However, he has not taken any steps toward this; and possibly, this is the main reason for the resumption of violence in Algeria.

Algerian prisons continue to be filled with political prisoners. Some of Algeria's political parties remain illegal and are unable to carry out overt activities. By taking advantage of the state of emergency regulations, which have not yet been lifted, Algerian forces carry out attacks on residential areas on a daily basis and every so often they kill several opposition members. The newly established statesmen in Algeria have not taken any steps to reinstate the rights of those who were elected by the people—rights that were usurped by the former coup council. Moreover, by ordering the Islamists to refrain from opposing the current rulers, the statesmen continue the former suppressive conditions.

These suppressive conditions show that the current situation in Algeria is not very different from the situation that prevailed a month ago. The only difference is that the ruling pawns have changed. The continuation of the suppressive climate in Algeria has destroyed all grounds for goodwill by the opposition and is gradually returning Algeria to the past violent situation. In this climate, the current Algerian Government is responsible for the blood that is shed and the destruction that is done.

Tehran Views U.S.-North Korean-IAEA Relations

NC2202094794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Commentary by News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] North Korea has taken new steps on the eve of the assembly of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] heads in Vienna. On Monday [21 February] Pyongyang put forth new conditions for the inspection of its nuclear installations by the IAEA. Among these conditions is the date for this inspection.

North Korea has made the date of the inspection of its nuclear installations contingent on the progress in the U.S.-North Korean talks, which are to be held in New York. In North Korea's opinion, the precise date of the inspection should be in coordination with the date that the United States has set for its other decisions on North Korea.

Probably, Pyongyang wants all the aspects of the issue to be clarified before the inspection of its nuclear installations by the IAEA. It seems that what North Korea means by U.S. decisions is the cancellation of the joint military maneuvers by the United States and South Korea and U.S. economic assistance to North Korea.

At the same time, Pyongyang has announced that it has agreed only to a limited inspection of its nuclear installations and has threatened that if it is pressured to expand this inspection it will cancel its agreement with the IAEA. On the basis of this agreement, North Korea will allow the IAEA to inspect only seven of its nine nuclear bases. North Korea's objective behind this threat is to gain an IAEA guarantee from the very start that it will not apply pressure about the other two nuclear sites. The developments in the Korean peninsula will be determined by the IAEA's reply to North Korea.

Political analysts believe Pyongyang's new actions are a result of the pressure that the United States has placed on it through threats. Negative action leads to negative reaction, and as long as the United States ignores North Korea's wishes and intends to pressure that country, it will have no alternative but to retaliate.

At any rate, if the United States and the IAEA ignore North Korea's recent threat, the talks may reach an impasse. Moreover, Pyongyang will prevent an inspection by the IAEA. Thus, the crisis in the Korean peninsula will become more complicated and finding a solution will become more difficult.

Trial of KEYHAN-E HAVA'I Managing Director Begins

94LA0080C Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 26 Jan 94 p 2

[Text] Tehran, 27 Dey [17 Jan] (KEYHAN News Service)—In the continued investigation of the complaint from 'Ali Akbar Sa'idi-Sirjani about the publication of an article criticizing his views in the publication KEYHAN-E HAVA'I, the trial of KEYHAN-E HAVA'I's managing director will begin this year in the month of Esfand [20 February-19 March 1994] at the Tehran Public Prosecutor's Office.

According to the summons issued by the Ministry of Justice Palace on 5 Dey [26 December] for 'Abbas Salimi-Namin, managing director of KEYHAN-E HAVA'I, the trial is scheduled for 1000 on 8 Esfand [27 February] this year at Tehran Penal Court 2, Branch 199.

In this summons, the charge against the managing director of KEYHAN-E HAVA'I is said to be "publishing lies."

Sa'idi-Sirjani began his complaint against KEYHAN-E HAVA'I's managing director in the year 1368 [21 March 1989-20 March 1990], when an article criticizing his writing in the newspaper ETTELA'AT was published in KEYHAN-E HAVA'I. Investigation of this case was begun in earnest at that time by the Ministry of Justice. The managing director of KEYHAN-E HAVA'I has been summoned several times to give explanations to the public prosecutor, and according to the most recent summons, his trial is to begin in the month of Esfand.

After questioning the managing director of KEYHAN-E HAVA'I and listening to his explanations, the special investigator for this case determined that Sa'idi-Sirjani's claim could not be pursued and announced that the investigation of the case was closed, but the Tehran deputy prosecutor canceled the investigator's opinion and reopened the case.

Sa'idi-Sirjani is among those who are interviewed on foreign radio programs such as the BBC and the Voice of America, usually about cultural, social, and sometimes political matters, and his writing is published in Persian-language newspapers published abroad.

New IRI School Opens in Damascus

94LA0080E Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 22 Dec 93 p 20

[Text] Tehran, 22 Azar [15 Dec] (KEYHAN-E HAVA'I News Service)—A new Iranian school has opened in Damascus, admitting Iranian, Afghan, Pakistani, and Arab students.

This school was opened on Woman's Day in Damascus near the grave of Her Holiness Zaynab (peace be upon her) on the birth anniversary of Her Holiness Fatimeh Zahra (peace be upon her) through the efforts of officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Ministry of Education and Training and the office supervising Iranian schools outside the country in Syria and Lebanon.

At the opening ceremonies for this school, the supervisor of Iranian schools outside the country said: The establishment of these schools is an important step in the spread of the real Islamic culture, and participation in these schools by friends of the Islamic Republic of Iran increases every day.

Studying in the new school are 130 Iranian, Afghan and Pakistani students and students from several Arab countries in the region.

* More New Appointments to Offices Announced

94LA0078H Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 12 Jan 94 p 4

[Text] On the recommendation of the minister of the interior and with the approval of the Council of Ministers, Mahmud Ahmadinezhad was appointed governor-general of the new province of Ardebil.

The deputy minister of culture and higher education for educational affairs appointed Dr. Akbar Haj Ebrahim-Zargar as the new supervisor of the National UNESCO Commission in Iran.

The executive director of the Social Security Organization issued an order making Engineer 'Ali Ashraf-Afkhami this organization's deputy for legislative and parliamentary affairs.

By order of Engineer Ne'matzadeh, minister of industries, Mohammad Taqi-Banki was appointed deputy minister of industries and executive director of the National Iran Industries Organization, and assumed his duties.

Based on an order by the minister of culture and Islamic guidance, Engineer Kazeruni was appointed chief of the National Cultural Heritage Organization.

* New Appointments to Various Offices Announced

94LA0078F Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 5 Jan 94 p 4

[Text] By order of Engineer Torkan, minister of roads and transportation, Engineer Mohammad Sa'idnezhad, deputy minister of roads and transportation for shipping and roads, has been appointed deputy minister of roads and transportation for shipping.

Engineer Ne'matzadeh, minister of industries, has issued separate orders appointing Jahangir 'Asgari, Mohammad Reza-Fayaz, Jahangir Afshar-Azad, Mohammad Javad-Negahban, Akbar Amini and Ja'far Nasehzadeh as deputy minister for administration and finance, deputy minister for Majles and province affairs, general manager for statistics and information, general director for investigation and complaints, general manager of Majles and province affairs, and supervisor of the office of legal affairs, respectively.

* Radio Communications Inaugurated in Chah Bahar

94LA0078E Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 29 Dec 93 p 10

[Text] Zahedan—IRNA. 3 Azar [21 December]—The Sistan va Baluchestan General Office of Ports and Shipping has opened a radio communications station in Chah Bahar with an advanced system.

This naval communications system can provide telegraph, telephone, and telex service between domestic and foreign representative offices, shipping companies and foreign ships in all the four naval districts designated by the International Maritime Organization.

At this station's inauguration ceremony, the executive director of the Ports and Shipping Organization gave a speech. He said: The Port of Chah Bahar is quite important as a transit area for goods moving between Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Iran.

He said the communications system created in this port is one of the most advanced maritime communications facilities in the world. He said: This system will be installed and put into operation within two months by domestic specialists and experts.

Cable TV Operation Depends on Voice, Vision Approval

94LA0080D Tehran SALAM in Persian 19 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] (News Service)—The creation of a cable television network is prohibited without approval from the Voice and Visage organization and no one has the right to have a cable television organization.

The public relations office of the Voice and Vision organization reports that Mr. Mohammad Hashemi, chief of this organization, gave a speech at a gathering of public relations managers in the Voice and Vision organization, in which he announced the above. He said: The question of cable networks was not raised in the way it was discussed in the press. In an agreement with the Ministry of Guidance, the Voice and Vision organization announced that if films made by that ministry are produced in accordance with the Voice and Vision organization's broadcast rules and criteria, this organization will broadcast the films on national and province center networks.

He noted: The goal in doing this is to occupy the free time of the people, and especially those who are unable to buy video equipment.

Hashemi discussed the responsibility of the public relations office of the Voice and Vision organization. He said: The Voice and Vision organization is not understood by the general public because of the complexity and variety of its work and activities. Many people do not know about the problems of radio and television programming. For this reason, to show these complexities, the public relations office of the Voice and Vision organization must set up production programs in order to take effective steps to make better contact with its audience.

Mohsenian Rad, a university professor, also spoke at this meeting on the role and place of public relations in society. He said: Public relations must try to create a positive outlook in society and it must oppose negative outlooks.

He said that the success of a desirable public relations office depends on increasing the knowledge and information of the individuals in that public relations office on a daily basis.